File No.14011/04/2019-SCD-V((Part-I)

Government of India
Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment
(Department of Social Justice & Empowerment)
(SCD-V)

Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi-110001
The 30th March,2021

To,

Addl. Chief Secretary/
Principal Secretary/ Secretary
Addl. Secretary/ Incharges
Social Welfare Department/SC/OBC Welfare Department
All States/UTs (as per list attached)

Subject: Revised Guidelines for Post-Matric Scholarships to the students belonging to Scheduled Castes for studies in India(2020-2021 to 2025-26)-reg.

Sir,

I am directed to enclose herewith the Revised Guidelines for Post-Matric Scholarships to the students belonging to Scheduled Castes for studies in India(2020-2021 to 2025-26).

2.   This issues with the approval of Hon'ble Minister,SJ&E.

Encl: as above

Yours faithfully
Validity unknown
Digitally signed by GOVIND MISHRA
Date: 2021.0.80.12:45:33 IST
(Govind Mishra)
Under Secretary to the Govt. of India

GUIDELINES

POST MATRIC SCHOLARSHIPS

TO THE STUDENTS BELONGING TO

SCHEDULED CASTES

FOR STUDIES IN INDIA

(2020-2021 to 2025-26)

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE &
EMPOWERMENT
Department of Social Justice & Empowerment

(March, 2021)

Post Matric Scholarship for SCs: Scheme Guidelines

STUDIES IN INDIA (PMS-SC)
(With effect from 2020-2021)

1. Objective

1.1   The objective of the scheme is to appreciably increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio of SC students in higher education with a focus on those from the poorest households, by providing financial assistance at post-matriculation or post-secondary stage to enable them to complete their education.

2. Scope

2.1   These scholarships are available for studies in India only and the awardees are selected by the State Government/Union Territory to which the applicant actually belongs (i.e. the State/UT in which permanently settled or domiciled, as per the terms of domicile decided by the State).

2.2   This is applicable to all the students who are currently beneficiaries of the scheme as well as fresh admissions.

3. Definitions

a) "*Group 1: Degree and Post Graduate level professional courses*" shall mean: all Professional courses in Medicine, Engineering, Technology, Planning, Architecture, Design, Fashion Technology, Agriculture, Veterinary & Allied Sciences, Management, Business Finance /Administration, Computer Science/ Applications (ii) Post Graduate Diploma courses in various branches of Management & Medicine(iii) C.A./I.C.W.A./C.S./I.C.F.A. etc. (iv) M.Phil., Ph.D. and Post-Doctoral Programmes (D.Lit., D.Sc. etc.) of Group I, Group II and Group III courses.(v) L.L.B, Integrated L.L.B, L.L.M

b) "*Group 2: Other Professional Courses leading to Degree, Diploma, Certificate*" shall mean all Professional Courses leading to Degree, M Ed. / M. Pharma., Diploma, Certificate in areas like Pharmacy (B Pharma.), Nursing(B Nursing), BFS, other para-medical branches like rehabilitation, diagnostics etc., Mass Communication, Hotel Management & Catering, Travel/Tourism/Hospitality Management, Interior Decoration, Nutrition& Dietetics, Commercial Art, Financial Services (e.g. Banking, Insurance, Taxation etc.) for which entrance qualification is minimum Sr. Secondary (10+2) and

Vocational stream, ITI courses and Polytechnic where entrance qualification is Class XII or above.

c) "*Group 3: Graduate and Post Graduate course*" shall mean: courses not covered under Group 1& Group 2 e.g. B.A / B.Sc. / B.Com etc. M.A/ M. Sc./ M.Com etc.

d) "*Group 4: All post-matriculation (Post Class X level) non-degree courses*" shall mean: All post-matriculation level non-degree courses for which entrance qualification is High School (Class X), e.g. Senior secondary certificate (class XI and XII); both general and vocational stream, ITI courses, 3 year diploma courses in Polytechnics, etc.

Note: The list of courses in various groups is indicative and States/UTs may add courses as per laid down standard in the State/UT.

e) "*Compulsory non-refundable fees*" shall mean**:** fee payable for enrolment/registration, tuition, games, Union, Library, Magazine, Medical Examination and such other fees compulsorily payable by the scholar to the institution or University/ Board, but does not include Refundable deposits like caution money, security deposit will, however, be excluded.

f)*"Demand"* for a year indicates the total fund requirement for release of scholarship to all eligible students under the scheme as per the entitlements for that **particular year.**

g) **"Freeship Card"** shall mean: A card issued by the State Govt./UT Administration that entitles a student eligible for scholarship under this Scheme, to take admission in an institution, without pre-payment of tuition fee and hostel fee.

4. **Eligibility of Educational Institutions**

4.1   Only such educational Institutions which maintain the laid down academic standards shall be covered under the scheme. The following conditions regarding the courses offered, performance of the institution, Aadhaar based attendance system are also required to be adhered to by the Institutions/Universities/Colleges in order to be eligible under the scheme:

i. Only Institutions/Colleges with the 'AISHE Code'/UDISE' Code' shall be eligible for the scholarship scheme. Based on the AISHE/UDISE-Code of the institution, all details of the institution such as - registration, affiliation and accreditation, courses being offered and number of seats approved for each course - will be pulled from the AISHE/UDISE server on to the scholarship portal automatically.

ii. All participating higher education institutions shall get NAAC/NBA accreditation before 2024, for continuation in the scheme from 2025-26 onwards.

iii. The scholarship benefits shall be linked with Aadhaar based attendance system. Therefore, the college/institution will maintain Aadhaar based attendance on a daily basis and will submit attendance details on the portal.

iv. The institutions will submit half-yearly self-audited reports to the State Governments in a prescribed format which shall be separately issued.

v. The institutions should be willing to honour the FREESHIP CARD issued by the State/District Authority through the scholarship portal and admit the student without insisting on pre-payment of the college/tuition fee or hostel fee. This would be paid by the student on release of the scholarship amount by the Government as per the provisions of this scheme. In this regard, the State Governments will coordinate with the institutions located in their respective States.

4.2 Scholarships will be given for the study of all recognized post-matriculation or post-secondary courses (Intermediate/Senior Secondary, Diploma, long-term Vocational Training Certificate, Graduate, Post Graduate courses etc.) pursued in recognized Institutions/ Universities/ Colleges falling in any of the following 9 categories:

i. Institutions of National Importance;

ii. Central University/ State University/ Autonomous colleges recognized by UGC and Universities /Colleges recognized under section 2(f) of UGC Act;

iii. Deemed Universities;

iv. All Private Universities recognized by State/Centre;

v. Private Professional Institutions affiliated to a recognized Central/State University and covered by a Fee Fixation Committee as mandated by Supreme Court;

vi. Recognized schools/colleges for Classes XI and class XII;

vii. Diploma granting Institutions as recognized by State/UT Governments;

viii. Vocational Training Institutes affiliated to National Council of Vocational Training (NCVT);

ix. Institutions affiliated/ approved by the appropriate bodies like NMC/AICTE etc. or any regulatory body established by State/UT/Centre.

Provided that where a particular number of seats for a particular course have been recognized / authorized by the concerned regulatory authority, the scholarships shall be restricted to those numbers and courses.

5. ## Conditions of Eligibility of Students

5.1   The scholarships are open to Nationals of India only.

5.2   Only those candidates who belong to Scheduled Castes so specified in relation to the State/Union Territory to which the applicant actually belongs /domiciled as determined by the State/UT and who have passed the Matriculation or Higher Secondary or any higher examination of a recognized University or Board of Secondary Education will be eligible.

5.3   Scholarships will be paid to the students whose parents'/guardians' income from all sources does not exceed Rs. 2,50,000/- (Rupees Two lakh Fifty thousand only) during the last Financial Year. Income certificate is required to be taken once only i.e. at the time of admission only to courses which are continuing for more than one year. The income certificate shall be issued by the Authority as decided by the State Government.

5.4   The ceiling on age limit for admission as regular student in different classes should be decided by concerned Institutions.

5.5   Candidates who, after passing one stage of education are studying in the same stage of education in a different subject e.g. Intermediate Science after Intermediate Arts or B.Com after B.A. or M.A in one subject after M.A in other subjects will not be eligible.

5.6   Students, who pursue their studies through correspondence/online courses, are also eligible. The term correspondence includes distant and continuous education for courses in Central/ State Universities only. Non-refundable fees shall be paid and no academic allowance will be paid.

5.7   All the children of any parent/guardian will be entitled to receive benefits of the scheme.

5.8   A scholarship holder under this scheme will not hold any other scholarship/stipend. If awarded any other scholarship/stipend, the student can exercise his/her option for either of the two scholarships/stipends, whichever is more beneficial to him/her, and should inform the awarding authority through the Head of the Institution about the option made. No scholarship will be paid to the students under this scheme from the date he/she accepts another scholarship/stipend. The student can however, accept free lodging or a grant or ad-hoc monetary help from the State Government or any other source for the purchase of

books, equipment or for meeting the expenses on board and lodging in addition to the scholarship amount paid under this scheme.

5.9 All seats filled through arbitrary and non-transparent processes (including management quota, NRI quota, spot admissions etc.) without following the merit criteria as decided by the State Government are not eligible for these scholarships. The fees claimed against management quota seats, spot admission seat in any Institution /University will not be reimbursed. In case of any contradiction on the classification of seats or non-clarity on the classification of seats in the State/UT, the following criteria may be followed:

    i)   If there is no arbitrariness/ discretion in the admission process and the fee for the course is fixed by the Fee Fixation/Fee Rationalization committee set up by the competent authority, the said seats may not be considered as the Management Quota Seats. However, the State Governments may satisfy themselves of the following before release of scholarships:

        i.   That the applicants claiming the scholarship have been admitted through a transparent process which involved calling of applications through advertisements, preparation of ranks, selection of candidates on merit list, and publication of selection list and others as deemed fit by the State Government;

        ii.   That the fees for courses are duly approved by the Fee Fixation/Fee Rationalization Committee set up by the competent authority.

5.10 Students shall be encouraged to have Aadhaar linked Bank accounts to facilitate payments through the Aadhaar Payment Bridge.

6. Role of the State Governments

6.1 Although many SC students have availed benefits under this scheme and have occupied high positions in the society, still the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of SCs in higher education (23.0%) lags behind the national average (27.0%). It is the endeavour of the Government to raise the GER of SCs in higher education from 23.0 % to the national average in the next five years. Similarly, the GER in Senior Secondary education of SCs has to increase from the current 56% to the national average in the next five years. Towards this end, special focus of the implementing agencies is required to achieve the goal.

6.2   All the SC students with annual income of up to Rs 2.50 lakh per annum would be eligible under the scheme. However, the State Government will additionally make special efforts to identify the poorest households from various sources and enroll the eligible students under the scheme in a mission mode. Further, these students would be monitored on regular basis so that they continue with their studies. Such students shall include (i) students from SC households with three or more deprivations as per SECC-2011 (ii) students from SC households where one or both the parents are illiterate and (iii) the students who have passed 10th standard from a State Government/ Municipality/Local Body school. In this regard, States/UTs will launch special campaigns to identify and cover such students.

6.3   States/UTs may adopt methodology suitable to the local conditions for identification of such students e.g. SC majority districts/blocks/villages may be taken first for identification of poorest students or students leaving class 10thor 12th class may be tracked in association with the education department or data emanating from other Central/State schemes indicating the dropouts rates or other sources as deemed fit. Every State Government shall undertake a campaign every year in March/April to identify such students and mentor them to enrol and avail scholarships. Such students will be helped for identification of courses also as per their skills.

6.4   Awareness drive shall be undertaken by the State Governments/UTs about the scheme through the Gram Panchayats Notice Boards, school committees, and discussions in the parent-teacher association meetings and other public awareness measures, in order to extend its coverage and also minimize any misuse by unscrupulous elements.

6.5   The States are required to take up identification of the students for fresh enrolment by taking up systematic drive covering all the higher secondary schools and encouraging the pupils who have dropped out after Class 12th to come back to higher education.

6.6   It is essential that the fresh enrolments to the extent possible are made in the courses which are having employment potential. For this purpose, the State may do an exercise in consultation with the Higher Education Department of the State Government, and the State Skill Mission for identifying courses which would improve the employment potential of the students. It is strongly advised that fresh enrolment may be made in these courses. Such skill courses should be long term courses with periodicity of at least 1 year and conducted by the institutions as per Para 4 of the scheme guidelines.

6.7.   State Government will ensure that the beneficiary, at the time of admission, applies for the scholarship also. In this regard, the State Government may open facilitation centers

or nominate a nodal officer in the educational institutions so that the entry into the student database for renewals and fresh admissions can be done in a stipulated timeframe.

6.8   The State Governments shall put in place a scholarship portal that has all features as prescribed in para 13 of these guidelines and share the data on a real-time basis with the Central portal.

6.9 The State/Central Government shall have robust monitoring systems, including field inspections, social audits, data analytics etc. so that timely payments are made to eligible beneficiaries.

6.10 States/UTs shall ensure that Fee Rationalization/Fixation Committees are set up for all courses.

7. Components of the Scholarship

7.1   The scholarship includes the following components for the complete duration of the course:-

  i.   Compulsory non-refundable fees including tuition fee, as fixed by the Fee Fixation/Rationalization Committee of the State Government

  ii.   Academic allowance

Category of courses	Yearly (in Rs)	
	Hostellers	Day Scholars
Group 1: Degree and Post Graduate level professional courses	13500	7000
Group 2: Other Professional Courses leading to Degree, Diploma, Certificate	9500	6500
Group 3: Graduate and Post Graduate courses not covered under Group I & Group II	6000	3000
Group 4: All post-matriculation (Post Class X level) non-degree courses	4000	2500

Note 1. Ten percent extra allowances shall be provided for Divyang students.

Note 2. Students pursuing C.A. /I.C.W.A. /C.S. /I.C.F.A. shall be treated as day scholars for the purpose of academic allowance. Students studying through correspondence/online courses shall not be eligible for academic allowance.

Note 3. The academic allowance as above shall be applicable from the year 2021-22. For the year 2020-21 the allowances as applicable under the earlier guidelines shall apply.

7.3   The Academic Allowance will be linked with the Consumer Price Index Number for Industrial workers. The Annual increment will be applicable w.e.f. April of each year and will be based on Index for the period January-December of the preceding year. The first revision would be applicable w.e.f. April, 2022 and in this regard Department will issue separate orders on Annual basis.

7.4 The State Governments may, if they so decide, top up the academic allowance from their own resources.

8. Freeship Card and process for issue

8.1 All eligible students shall be entitled to take admission in the institutions without pre-payment of tuition fees and hostel fees as per the Scheme Guidelines. To enable this, a FREESHIP CARD will be issued by the State Government to the eligible students, as per procedure detailed below. This Freeship card shall make the student eligible to study in the institution without pre-payment of the fees, and on the condition that as and when amount is released to the student's account, the institution would be intimated to collect the same from the student.

8.2 The student shall, well before the expected date of admission, register for issuance of a Freeship Card on the respective scholarship portal giving the details like the Aadhaar number, the name of the course in which he/she wants to take admission (e.g. MBBS, B.Sc., Class XI etc.) and an undertaking that the institution's charges would be paid within 7 working days from the date of receipt of the scholarship amount in his/her account. For the purpose of registration of Freeship Card, the portals shall remain open throughout the year.

8.3 The verification of the income, caste and merit details should be automatically done from the databases which are linked online for instant verification. The process should be entirely paperless. Until the above system is brought into effect, the documents may be scanned and uploaded which include: passport size photograph, copy of each of the certificates for diploma, degree etc. in respect of all examinations passed, Caste certificate duly signed by the authorized officer, valid Income certificate issued by the competent authority as prescribed by the State Govt. etc.

8.4 After the registration on the Portal, if the student is found eligible, all States/UTs will complete the verification process within 30 days from the receipt of the registration request from the students and issue the Freeship Card through the IT portal, mentioning the course

for which application is made so that the eligible students are not denied admissions due to delay in depositing tuition fees. It should be possible for the student to download the Free Ship Card from the portal itself. Once complete digitization of all the required certificates is done, such Freeship Card shall be automatically generated immediately on registration, if the student is found eligible.

8.5 The Freeship Card shall contain the details given in Annexure-1, and shall be digitally signed. For the purpose of admission, the Freeship card will remain valid for period of one year from the date of issue.

8.6 If a student wants to change his/her course before taking admission in an institution, he can do so by logging on IT portal and a fresh Freeship Card shall be issued automatically for all eligible students.

8.7 In case of renewal students, there shall be no need for fresh registration for the Freeship card and a card once issued to him/her shall be valid for the entire duration of the course.

9. Application for Scholarship and Verification

9.1 **Application-on-the-day-of-admission**: The institutions shall ensure that all students admitted to their institution and having Freeship Cards issued as detailed in para 8 of these Guidelines, apply on the IT portal for the scholarship **on the same day as the date of admission into the institution.**

9.2 On the day of admission itself, the institution shall verify on the scholarship portal that the student has taken admission in the institution with the same course as mentioned on the Free ship card and is now a bonafide student of the institution.

9.3. In case of renewal students, the student shall be auto-renewed based on the attendance and confirmation from the institution of the student having been promoted to the next class and having joined back the same course as hosteller/day scholar, as the case may be.

10. Funding Pattern of the Scheme

10.1   There will be a 60: 40 sharing ratio between the Centre and States (90:10 in case of North Eastern States) of the average demand for the scheme for three year period 2017-18 to 2019-20 (to be considered as the base period), with a 5% overall annual increase each

year in the Central assistance for all States put together in absolute terms w.r.t. base period. The above shall be applicable from 2020-21 onwards and the scheme will be continued upto the financial year 2025-26.

10.2   Thus, for the purpose of determining the demand for the year 2020-21, the average demand of 2017-18 to 2019-20, or the actual demand for 2020-21, whichever is lesser, will be considered for each State/UT. For subsequent years i.e. 2021-22 & onwards, the Central assistance for all States put together will be limited by a 5% annual increase over the average demand for the scheme for the base period of 2017-18 to 2019-20, which shall be ensured by the Project Appraisal Committee (PAC) while appraising the States' Annual Action Plans. The Ministry will have the flexibility of adjusting the allocation of funds between the States subject to the total allocation approved, without disrupting the 60:40 sharing ratio between the Centre and the States.

10.3 If the total fund requirement is over and above the annual 5% limit, the central share will be limited to that and the additional requirement of funds, if any, shall be met by the State Governments from their own resources.

10.3. All the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations implementing the scheme will maintain the data of all the beneficiaries on their online portal and will distinctly mention the amount of scholarship under various components as mentioned in the Scheme.

11. Payment Mechanism

11.1   The entire scholarship amount - both from the State and Central Government - including the tuition fees, academic allowance and any other admissible allowance will be paid directly into the account of the students **ONLY through DBT** preferably through an Aadhaar Based Payment System (Aadhaar Payment Bridge) from 2021-22. The States shall preferably release the payments through PFMS System so that the accounts of the students are not required to be validated again.

11.2   Starting from 2021-22, the Central share in the scheme would also be released on DBT mode directly into the bank accounts of the students, after ensuring that the concerned State Government has released their share.

11.3 All the States/UTs/Centre would adhere to the following timelines for processing of the applications and release of scholarship amounts:

o The scholarship portals would remain open throughout the year so that all eligible students can register for the Freeship Card and apply for the scholarships.

o Disbursal of scholarships for all applications (fresh/renewals) shall be made in one instalment as per the following schedule:

Dates of receiving of applications	Date by which State share (40%; 10% in case of NE States) should be released	Date by which Central share (60%; 90% in case of NE States) should be released
From 1st April to 31st July	15th August	30th August
From 1st August to 30th November	30th December	26th January
From 1st December to 31st January*	28th February	15th March
From 1st February to 31st March*	With 75 days of application	Within 90 days of application

*Portal shall remain open only for submission of applications for scholarships for courses where admission is after November.

11.4 There shall be no delays in payment of the scholarships. For this purpose the State shall ensure that their installments are disbursed to the students by the timelines defined in previous para so that the Central share can also be released in time.

11.5 The Ministry of Social Justice vide notification number 428 dated Feb,16,2017 has notified Aadhaar as identity document under Section 7 of Aadhaar Act 2016 for all Scholarship Schemes w.e.f. 16th February 2017.

11.6 The authentication through Aadhaar would be compulsory at the time of renewals, if not provided earlier at the time of admission.

12. Duration and Renewal of Awards

12.1 The award once made will be payable up to the completion of the course subject to satisfactory academic performance and attendance of 75% in every academic year. The attendance will be verified through Aadhaar based attendance System.

12.2 If a scholar is unable to appear in the annual examination owing to illness, the award may be renewed subject to production of medical certificate from prescribed authority and acceptance of the same by institution /college.

12.3 If, according to the Regulations of a University/Institution, a student is promoted to the next higher class even though he/she may not have actually passed in lower class and is

required to take examination of the junior class again after sometime, he/she will be entitled to scholarship for the class to which he/she is promoted if the student is otherwise eligible for scholarship. Further, in case a student fails in any class and then again joins the same class as a regular student, he/she will be eligible for scholarship for one additional year or the actual period, .whichever is lower.

13.   IT Framework

13.1.   The scheme shall be run on an online platform with robust cyber security measures that would assure transparency, accountability, efficiency, and timely delivery of the assistance without any delays. The National Scholarship Portal (NSP) would be suitably modified for this purpose.

13.2.   If any State is already a running online portal that fulfils all the laid down parameters, they can continue with it, but share the data on real-time basis to the National Scholarship Portal or any other portal as specified by the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment in due course through instructions   for enabling constant monitoring. Therefore, all States/UTs implementing the scheme will migrate to online processing of disbursal of scholarships, where not already done. The scholarship portal should mandatorily have the following features:

a) The IT portal shall be integrated with the AISHE/UDISE portal for pulling the data about the institution in which the student has taken admission.

b) At the time of registration for Freeship Card, every student should provide an Aadhaar ID/Aadhaar EID and other alternative form of ID as per this Ministry's notification no. 428 dated 16.02.2017 which will enable elimination of duplication and false claims. The Aadhaar authentication is mandatory in case of renewals, if not provided at the time of admission. The Aadhaar number entered by the students should go through demo-auth on real-time basis before allowing entry into the registration portal.

c) The States shall undertake fool-proof verification of the eligibility, caste status, Aadhaar identification and bank account details on the online portal.

d) There shall be no upload of any documents or any certificates into the system. All data should be auto-verified by linking databases through digilocker or any such

mechanism, such as (i) school boards' results, including the CBSE/ICSE along with the certificates maintained by them; (ii) database of income certificates, domicile and caste certificates issued by State/District Administration and (iii) databases maintained by the Universities and Colleges, using Aadhaar number as the link.

e) All verification process of the students should be done using the above authenticated databases automatically using the digital process with little or no manual intervention. There should be no system of verification by the institutions or even the district level officers. Till such time such a system is put in place, the manual verification shall be completed within 30 days from the date of application, with a provision for 'presumed approval' if the same is not completed within 30 days.

f) A suitable system will be put in place for taking Aadhaar based attendance system which is non-intrusive and automatic. Till such a system is finalized by the Central Govt., the institution shall upload the attendance of the scholarship holder every month in the Attendance module that would be developed in the IT system.

g) There shall be no system of calling for the bank account details of the students and authenticating it. All payments should preferably go through Aadhaar Based Payment System (APB – Aadhaar Payment Bridge) after checking the Aadhaar number with the NPCI mapper.

h) The renewals should be automatic based on promotion to the next class and having the required attendance, subject to confirmation of the student having joined back the same course as hosteller/day scholar, as the case may be. There should not be any requirement for the student to apply for renewals.

i) A performance module to monitor the progress of student as well as performance of the institution should be suitably designed and incorporated.

j) Apart from this, the States shall maintain a complete database of the beneficiaries under various other scholarship schemes to ensure de-duplication of the beneficiaries.

k) The portal shall incorporate an online grievance redressal mechanism linking all the authorities responsible for implementation on the scholarship portal.

l) There shall be a provision indicating the students of the poorest households, as per the parameters provided under the Scheme, selected for scholarship.

m) The portal will make arrangements so that the students, once declared blacklisted, may not be able to apply for scholarship again.

14. Annual Action Plan

14.1   Every participating State/UT, on or before 28th February of the preceding year, will prepare a State level Annual Plan for the PMS-SC scheme. In case the State has any other initiative on similar lines to PMS-SC, this may be mentioned separately in the Action Plan. The Action Plan should give clearly the targets, eligibility, proposed coverage separately for poorest households, processes for identification, identification of courses having employment potential, systems for monitoring etc.

14.2   The Department will constitute an Project Appraisal Committee to appraise and approve the Annual Action Plans. These plans would be appraised at the Centre and the outlay for each State would be finalized before 15th April, of every year as per the annual increase indicated under the funding pattern. The constitution of the committee will be informed through separate instructions.

15. Performance of the States/UTs

15.1   The performance of the States/UTs would be measured annually on certain parameters like (i) payments as per the given time schedule (ii) coverage from the poorest households (iii) academic outcomes of the scholarship-holders (iv) Implementation of Aadhaar based attendance (v) Digitization of various certificates required for determining eligibility etc.

15.2.   The States/UTs would be ranked on the above parameters and top performing States will be awarded. The details in this regard will be prepared after consultations, and will be shared through instructions in due course.

16. Announcement of the Scheme by States/UTs

16.1   All the State Governments/UT Administrations will announce starting from April, the details of the Scheme and invite applications by issuing an advertisement in the leading newspapers of the State and through their respective websites/ Scholarship portals and other modes of media. The applicant should submit the completed application to the prescribed authority on the portal specified for this purpose before the last date prescribed for receipt of applications.

17. Process of Registration and Application for the student

17.1 The student shall, well before the expected date of admission, register on the online on scholarship portal for issue of a Freeship Card as detailed in Para 8.2 of these Guidelines.

17.2 On admission to the institution to a course mentioned in the Freeship Card, the student shall apply, on the day of the admission itself, for scholarship, giving details of the Freeship card and the course and institution admitted to.

17.3 Students continuing their courses for which they have already been sanctioned scholarship in the previous year, i.e. renewal students, shall, be automatically renewed for scholarship as detailed in para 8.7.

18. Evaluation/Social Audit and follow up action

18.1. There shall be thorough evaluation of the outcomes of the scheme in regular intervals to ascertain the effectiveness of scheme implementation and for tracking the progress of the students. This may include conduct of social audits once a year, annual third-party evaluation, and half-yearly self-audited reports from each institution.

18.2. The social audits are to be conducted by the Social Audit Units of the State Governments formed by the Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India duly meeting the cost from the administrative cost of the scheme.

18.3. The State Government shall also set up a robust monitoring mechanism for monitoring the academic progress of the students enrolled to the scheme.

18.4. The students who are found to be lagging behind should be provided remedial coaching so that their academic outcome shall not be less than the average academic outcomes. The State Action Plan should contain clear provisions for this.

18.5. In order to ensure proper accountability, physical verifications at various levels viz. Block/District/State levels shall be done by the States/UTs covering at least 10% of the institutions/students, chosen randomly through an algorithm. All private institutions offering courses at the level of graduation or above shall, however, be mandatorily inspected annually.

19. Administrative Charges

19.1. The administrative cost for administration, monitoring and evaluation shall be limited to 1% of the annual outlay.

19.2. Each State/UT shall project the requirement of funds for undertaking the monitoring of the implementation, in its Annual Action Plan. In case, funds are required for Book,

these may be indicated under the Administrative charges. This would be considered by the PAC, ensuring that the total outflow on this count does not exceed 1% of the annual outlay.

19.3. The PAC shall give first priority in approving administrative charges for development of IT infrastructure, setting up of Technical Support Group cum Project Monitoring Unit at the Central/State level and social audits.

20. Mechanism for redressal of grievances

20.1. There shall be an online grievance redressal mechanism linking all the authorities responsible for implementation on the scholarship portal.

20.2. The student shall be able to lodge a grievance either through the portal or by a mobile app.

20.3. Every institution shall have a Grievance Redressal Officer (GRO) who is responsible for entertaining the grievances and resolving them by following up with the appropriate authority.

20.4. The non-resolution of the grievance at the institution level in a given time frame shall automatically be escalated to the district and later to the State level for resolution.

21. Other Conditions for the Award

21.1. If a student is found to have obtained a scholarship by false statements, his/ her scholarship will be cancelled forthwith and the amount of the scholarship paid will be recovered, at the discretion of the concerned State Government. The student concerned will be blacklisted and debarred for scholarship in any scheme forever.

21.2. A scholarship awarded may be cancelled if the scholar changes the subject of the course of study for which the scholarship was originally awarded or changes the institution of study, without prior approval of the State Government. The Head of the Institution shall report such cases to the State which will stop payment of the scholarship money. The amount already paid may also be recovered at the discretion of the State Government.

21.3. A scholar is liable to refund the scholarship amount at the discretion of the State Government, if during the course of the year, the studies for which the scholarship has been awarded, is discontinued by him/her.

21.4. The provisions of this scheme can be changed at any time at the discretion of the Government of India.

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The following important parameters should be contained in the FREE SHIP CARD

Name of the Student

Student's ID on the portal

Fathers' Name-

Aadhaar Card Number-

Caste

Date of Birth

Annual Family income

Domicile State-

Address of the Student

Course (in which admission is sought)-

Duration of Course-

Class (presently studying)-

Class (Last class previously studied)-

Major provisions of the scheme

Student's undertaking to reimburse the amount to institution within 7 days after receipt of scholarship

Goverment Of India

GUIDELINES

POST MATRIC SCHOLARSHIPS
TO THE STUDENTS BELONGING TO
SCHEDULED CASTES
FOR STUDIES IN INDIA
(2020-2021 to 2025-26)

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE &
EMPOWERMENT
Department of Social Justice & Empowerment

(March, 2021)

SCHEME OF POST MATRIC SCHOLARSHIPS
TO THE STUDENTS BELONGING TO SCHEDULED CASTES FOR

<p align="center" style="color:#00AEEF">STUDIES IN INDIA (PMS-SC)
(With effect from 2020-2021)</p>

1. Objective

1.1 The objective of the scheme is to appreciably increase the Gross Enrolment Ratio of SC students in higher education with a focus on those from the poorest households, by providing financial assistance at post-matriculation or post-secondary stage to enable them to complete their education.

2. Scope

2.1 These scholarships are available for studies in India only and the awardees are selected by the State Government/Union Territory to which the applicant actually belongs (i.e. the State/UT in which permanently settled or domiciled, as per the terms of domicile decided by the State).

2.2 This is applicable to all the students who are currently beneficiaries of the scheme as well as fresh admissions.

3. Definitions

a) **"Group 1: Degree and Post Graduate level professional courses"** shall mean: all Professional courses in Medicine, Engineering, Technology, Planning, Architecture, Design, Fashion Technology, Agriculture, Veterinary & Allied Sciences, Management, Business Finance /Administration, Computer Science/ Applications (ii) Post Graduate Diploma courses in various branches of Management & Medicine(iii) C.A./I.C.W.A./C.S./I.C.F.A. etc. (iv) M.Phil., Ph.D. and Post-Doctoral Programmes (D.Lit., D.Sc. etc.) of Group I, Group II and Group III courses.(v) L.L.B, Integrated L.L.B, L.L.M

b) **"Group 2: Other Professional Courses leading to Degree, Diploma, Certificate"** shall mean all Professional Courses leading to Degree, M Ed. / M. Pharma., Diploma, Certificate in areas like Pharmacy (B Pharma.), Nursing(B Nursing), BFS, other para-medical branches like rehabilitation, diagnostics etc., Mass Communication, Hotel Management & Catering, Travel/Tourism/Hospitality Management, Interior Decoration, Nutrition& Dietetics, Commercial Art, Financial Services (e.g. Banking, Insurance, Taxation etc.) for which entrance qualification is minimum Sr. Secondary (10+2) and

Vocational stream, ITI courses and Polytechnic where entrance qualification is Class XII or above.

c) "*Group 3: Graduate and Post Graduate course*" shall mean: courses not covered under Group 1& Group 2 e.g. B.A / B.Sc. / B.Com etc. M.A/ M. Sc./ M.Com etc.

d) "*Group 4: All post-matriculation (Post Class X level) non-degree courses*" shall mean: All post-matriculation level non-degree courses for which entrance qualification is High School (Class X), e.g. Senior secondary certificate (class XI and XII); both general and vocational stream, ITI courses, 3 year diploma courses in Polytechnics, etc.

Note: The list of courses in various groups is indicative and States/UTs may add courses as per laid down standard in the State/UT.

e) "*Compulsory non-refundable fees*" shall mean: fee payable for enrolment/registration, tuition, games, Union, Library, Magazine, Medical Examination and such other fees compulsorily payable by the scholar to the institution or University/ Board, but does not include Refundable deposits like caution money, security deposit will, however, be excluded.

f)*"Demand"* for a year indicates the total fund requirement for release of scholarship to all eligible students under the scheme as per the entitlements for that **particular year.**

g) **"Freeship Card"** shall mean: A card issued by the State Govt./UT Administration that entitles a student eligible for scholarship under this Scheme, to take admission in an institution, without pre-payment of tuition fee and hostel fee.

4. ## Eligibility of Educational Institutions

4.1   Only such educational Institutions which maintain the laid down academic standards shall be covered under the scheme. The following conditions regarding the courses offered, performance of the institution, Aadhaar based attendance system are also required to be adhered to by the Institutions/Universities/Colleges in order to be eligible under the scheme:

i. Only Institutions/Colleges with the 'AISHE Code'/UDISE' Code' shall be eligible for the scholarship scheme. Based on the AISHE/UDISE-Code of the institution, all details of the institution such as - registration, affiliation and accreditation, courses being offered and number of seats approved for each course - will be pulled from the AISHE/UDISE server on to the scholarship portal automatically.

ii. All participating higher education institutions shall get NAAC/NBA accreditation before 2024, for continuation in the scheme from 2025-26 onwards.

iii. The scholarship benefits shall be linked with Aadhaar based attendance system. Therefore, the college/institution will maintain Aadhaar based attendance on a daily basis and will submit attendance details on the portal.

iv. The institutions will submit half-yearly self-audited reports to the State Governments in a prescribed format which shall be separately issued.

v. The institutions should be willing to honour the FREESHIP CARD issued by the State/District Authority through the scholarship portal and admit the student without insisting on pre-payment of the college/tuition fee or hostel fee. This would be paid by the student on release of the scholarship amount by the Government as per the provisions of this scheme. In this regard, the State Governments will coordinate with the institutions located in their respective States.

4.2 Scholarships will be given for the study of all recognized post-matriculation or post-secondary courses (Intermediate/Senior Secondary, Diploma, long-term Vocational Training Certificate, Graduate, Post Graduate courses etc.) pursued in recognized Institutions/ Universities/ Colleges falling in any of the following 9 categories:

i. Institutions of National Importance;

ii. Central University/ State University/ Autonomous colleges recognized by UGC and Universities /Colleges recognized under section 2(f) of UGC Act;

iii. Deemed Universities;

iv. All Private Universities recognized by State/Centre;

v. Private Professional Institutions affiliated to a recognized Central/State University and covered by a Fee Fixation Committee as mandated by Supreme Court;

vi. Recognized schools/colleges for Classes XI and class XII;

vii. Diploma granting Institutions as recognized by State/UT Governments;

viii. Vocational Training Institutes affiliated to National Council of Vocational Training (NCVT);

ix. Institutions affiliated/ approved by the appropriate bodies like NMC/AICTE etc. or any regulatory body established by State/UT/Centre.

Provided that where a particular number of seats for a particular course have been recognized / authorized by the concerned regulatory authority, the scholarships shall be restricted to those numbers and courses.

5. **Conditions of Eligibility of Students**

5.1   The scholarships are open to Nationals of India only.

5.2   Only those candidates who belong to Scheduled Castes so specified in relation to the State/Union Territory to which the applicant actually belongs /domiciled as determined by the State/UT and who have passed the Matriculation or Higher Secondary or any higher examination of a recognized University or Board of Secondary Education will be eligible.

5.3   Scholarships will be paid to the students whose parents'/guardians' income from all sources does not exceed Rs. 2,50,000/- (Rupees Two lakh Fifty thousand only) during the last Financial Year. Income certificate is required to be taken once only i.e. at the time of admission only to courses which are continuing for more than one year. The income certificate shall be issued by the Authority as decided by the State Government.

5.4   The ceiling on age limit for admission as regular student in different classes should be decided by concerned Institutions.

5.5   Candidates who, after passing one stage of education are studying in the same stage of education in a different subject e.g. Intermediate Science after Intermediate Arts or B.Com after B.A. or M.A in one subject after M.A in other subjects will not be eligible.

5.6   Students, who pursue their studies through correspondence/online courses, are also eligible. The term correspondence includes distant and continuous education for courses in Central/ State Universities only. Non-refundable fees shall be paid and no academic allowance will be paid.

5.7   All the children of any parent/guardian will be entitled to receive benefits of the scheme.

5.8   A scholarship holder under this scheme will not hold any other scholarship/stipend. If awarded any other scholarship/stipend, the student can exercise his/her option for either of the two scholarships/stipends, whichever is more beneficial to him/her, and should inform the awarding authority through the Head of the Institution about the option made. No scholarship will be paid to the students under this scheme from the date he/she accepts another scholarship/stipend. The student can however, accept free lodging or a grant or ad-hoc monetary help from the State Government or any other source for the purchase of

books, equipment or for meeting the expenses on board and lodging in addition to the scholarship amount paid under this scheme.

5.9   All seats filled through arbitrary and non-transparent processes (including management quota, NRI quota, spot admissions etc.) without following the merit criteria as decided by the State Government are not eligible for these scholarships. The fees claimed against management quota seats, spot admission seat in any Institution /University will not be reimbursed. In case of any contradiction on the classification of seats or non-clarity on the classification of seats in the State/UT, the following criteria may be followed:

   i)   If there is no arbitrariness/ discretion in the admission process and the fee for the course is fixed by the Fee Fixation/Fee Rationalization committee set up by the competent authority, the said seats may not be considered as the Management Quota Seats. However, the State Governments may satisfy themselves of the following before release of scholarships:

   i.   That the applicants claiming the scholarship have been admitted through a transparent process which involved calling of applications through advertisements, preparation of ranks, selection of candidates on merit list, and publication of selection list and others as deemed fit by the State Government;

   ii.   That the fees for courses are duly approved by the Fee Fixation/Fee Rationalization Committee set up by the competent authority.

5.10   Students shall be encouraged to have Aadhaar linked Bank accounts to facilitate payments through the Aadhaar Payment Bridge.

6. Role of the State Governments

6.1   Although many SC students have availed benefits under this scheme and have occupied high positions in the society, still the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of SCs in higher education (23.0%) lags behind the national average (27.0%). It is the endeavour of the Government to raise the GER of SCs in higher education from 23.0 % to the national average in the next five years. Similarly, the GER in Senior Secondary education of SCs has to increase from the current 56% to the national average in the next five years. Towards this end, special focus of the implementing agencies is required to achieve the goal.

6.2   All the SC students with annual income of up to Rs 2.50 lakh per annum would be eligible under the scheme. However, the State Government will additionally make special efforts to identify the poorest households from various sources and enroll the eligible students under the scheme in a mission mode. Further, these students would be monitored on regular basis so that they continue with their studies. Such students shall include (i) students from SC households with three or more deprivations as per SECC-2011 (ii) students from SC households where one or both the parents are illiterate and (iii) the students who have passed 10th standard from a State Government/ Municipality/Local Body school. In this regard, States/UTs will launch special campaigns to identify and cover such students.

6.3   States/UTs may adopt methodology suitable to the local conditions for identification of such students e.g. SC majority districts/blocks/villages may be taken first for identification of poorest students or students leaving class 10th or 12th class may be tracked in association with the education department or data emanating from other Central/State schemes indicating the dropouts rates or other sources as deemed fit. Every State Government shall undertake a campaign every year in March/April to identify such students and mentor them to enrol and avail scholarships. Such students will be helped for identification of courses also as per their skills.

6.4   Awareness drive shall be undertaken by the State Governments/UTs about the scheme through the Gram Panchayats Notice Boards, school committees, and discussions in the parent-teacher association meetings and other public awareness measures, in order to extend its coverage and also minimize any misuse by unscrupulous elements.

6.5   The States are required to take up identification of the students for fresh enrolment by taking up systematic drive covering all the higher secondary schools and encouraging the pupils who have dropped out after Class 12th to come back to higher education.

6.6   It is essential that the fresh enrolments to the extent possible are made in the courses which are having employment potential. For this purpose, the State may do an exercise in consultation with the Higher Education Department of the State Government, and the State Skill Mission for identifying courses which would improve the employment potential of the students. It is strongly advised that fresh enrolment may be made in these courses. Such skill courses should be long term courses with periodicity of at least 1 year and conducted by the institutions as per Para 4 of the scheme guidelines.

6.7.   State Government will ensure that the beneficiary, at the time of admission, applies for the scholarship also. In this regard, the State Government may open facilitation centers

or nominate a nodal officer in the educational institutions so that the entry into the student database for renewals and fresh admissions can be done in a stipulated timeframe.

6.8   The State Governments shall put in place a scholarship portal that has all features as prescribed in para 13 of these guidelines and share the data on a real-time basis with the Central portal.

6.9 The State/Central Government shall have robust monitoring systems, including field inspections, social audits, data analytics etc. so that timely payments are made to eligible beneficiaries.

6.10 States/UTs shall ensure that Fee Rationalization/Fixation Committees are set up for all courses.

7. Components of the Scholarship

7.1   The scholarship includes the following components for the complete duration of the course:-

i.   Compulsory non-refundable fees including tuition fee, as fixed by the Fee Fixation/Rationalization Committee of the State Government

ii.   Academic allowance

Category of courses	Yearly (in Rs)	
	Hostellers	Day Scholars
Group 1: Degree and Post Graduate level professional courses	13500	7000
Group 2: Other Professional Courses leading to Degree, Diploma, Certificate	9500	6500
Group 3: Graduate and Post Graduate courses not covered under Group I & Group II	6000	3000
Group 4: All post-matriculation (Post Class X level) non-degree courses	4000	2500

Note 1. Ten percent extra allowances shall be provided for Divyang students.

Note 2. Students pursuing C.A. /I.C.W.A. /C.S. /I.C.F.A. shall be treated as day scholars for the purpose of academic allowance. Students studying through correspondence/online courses shall not be eligible for academic allowance.

Note 3. The academic allowance as above shall be applicable from the year 2021-22. For the year 2020-21 the allowances as applicable under the earlier guidelines shall apply.

7.3   The Academic Allowance will be linked with the Consumer Price Index Number for Industrial workers. The Annual increment will be applicable w.e.f. April of each year and will be based on Index for the period January-December of the preceding year. The first revision would be applicable w.e.f. April, 2022 and in this regard Department will issue separate orders on Annual basis.

7.4 The State Governments may, if they so decide, top up the academic allowance from their own resources.

8. Freeship Card and process for issue

8.1 All eligible students shall be entitled to take admission in the institutions without pre-payment of tuition fees and hostel fees as per the Scheme Guidelines. To enable this, a FREESHIP CARD will be issued by the State Government to the eligible students, as per procedure detailed below. This Freeship card shall make the student eligible to study in the institution without pre-payment of the fees, and on the condition that as and when amount is released to the student's account, the institution would be intimated to collect the same from the student.

8.2 The student shall, well before the expected date of admission, register for issuance of a Freeship Card on the respective scholarship portal giving the details like the Aadhaar number, the name of the course in which he/she wants to take admission (e.g. MBBS, B.Sc., Class XI etc.) and an undertaking that the institution's charges would be paid within 7 working days from the date of receipt of the scholarship amount in his/her account. For the purpose of registration of Freeship Card, the portals shall remain open throughout the year.

8.3 The verification of the income, caste and merit details should be automatically done from the databases which are linked online for instant verification. The process should be entirely paperless. Until the above system is brought into effect, the documents may be scanned and uploaded which include: passport size photograph, copy of each of the certificates for diploma, degree etc. in respect of all examinations passed, Caste certificate duly signed by the authorized officer, valid Income certificate issued by the competent authority as prescribed by the State Govt. etc.

8.4 After the registration on the Portal, if the student is found eligible, all States/UTs will complete the verification process within 30 days from the receipt of the registration request from the students and issue the Freeship Card through the IT portal, mentioning the course

for which application is made so that the eligible students are not denied admissions due to delay in depositing tuition fees. It should be possible for the student to download the Free Ship Card from the portal itself. Once complete digitization of all the required certificates is done, such Freeship Card shall be automatically generated immediately on registration, if the student is found eligible.

8.5 The Freeship Card shall contain the details given in Annexure-1, and shall be digitally signed. For the purpose of admission, the Freeship card will remain valid for period of one year from the date of issue.

8.6 If a student wants to change his/her course before taking admission in an institution, he can do so by logging on IT portal and a fresh Freeship Card shall be issued automatically for all eligible students.

8.7 In case of renewal students, there shall be no need for fresh registration for the Freeship card and a card once issued to him/her shall be valid for the entire duration of the course.

9. Application for Scholarship and Verification

9.1 **Application-on-the-day-of-admission**: The institutions shall ensure that all students admitted to their institution and having Freeship Cards issued as detailed in para 8 of these Guidelines, apply on the IT portal for the scholarship **on the same day as the date of admission into the institution.**

9.2 On the day of admission itself, the institution shall verify on the scholarship portal that the student has taken admission in the institution with the same course as mentioned on the Free ship card and is now a bonafide student of the institution.

9.3. In case of renewal students, the student shall be auto-renewed based on the attendance and confirmation from the institution of the student having been promoted to the next class and having joined back the same course as hosteller/day scholar, as the case may be.

10. Funding Pattern of the Scheme

10.1 There will be a 60: 40 sharing ratio between the Centre and States (90:10 in case of North Eastern States) of the average demand for the scheme for three year period 2017-18 to 2019-20 (to be considered as the base period), with a 5% overall annual increase each

year in the Central assistance for all States put together in absolute terms w.r.t. base period. The above shall be applicable from 2020-21 onwards and the scheme will be continued upto the financial year 2025-26.

10.2   Thus, for the purpose of determining the demand for the year 2020-21, the average demand of 2017-18 to 2019-20, or the actual demand for 2020-21, whichever is lesser, will be considered for each State/UT. For subsequent years i.e. 2021-22 & onwards, the Central assistance for all States put together will be limited by a 5% annual increase over the average demand for the scheme for the base period of 2017-18 to 2019-20, which shall be ensured by the Project Appraisal Committee (PAC) while appraising the States' Annual Action Plans. The Ministry will have the flexibility of adjusting the allocation of funds between the States subject to the total allocation approved, without disrupting the 60:40 sharing ratio between the Centre and the States.

10.3 If the total fund requirement is over and above the annual 5% limit, the central share will be limited to that and the additional requirement of funds, if any, shall be met by the State Governments from their own resources.

10.3.   All the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations implementing the scheme will maintain the data of all the beneficiaries on their online portal and will distinctly mention the amount of scholarship under various components as mentioned in the Scheme.

11. Payment Mechanism

11.1   The entire scholarship amount - both from the State and Central Government - including the tuition fees, academic allowance and any other admissible allowance will be paid directly into the account of the students **ONLY through DBT** preferably through an Aadhaar Based Payment System (Aadhaar Payment Bridge) from 2021-22. The States shall preferably release the payments through PFMS System so that the accounts of the students are not required to be validated again.

11.2   Starting from 2021-22, the Central share in the scheme would also be released on DBT mode directly into the bank accounts of the students, after ensuring that the concerned State Government has released their share.

11.3 All the States/UTs/Centre would adhere to the following timelines for processing of the applications and release of scholarship amounts:

- o The scholarship portals would remain open throughout the year so that all eligible students can register for the Freeship Card and apply for the scholarships.
- o Disbursal of scholarships for all applications (fresh/renewals) shall be made in one instalment as per the following schedule:

Dates of receiving of applications	Date by which State share (40%; 10% in case of NE States) should be released	Date by which Central share (60%; 90% in case of NE States) should be released
From 1st April to 31st July	15th August	30th August
From 1st August to 30th November	30th December	26th January
From 1st December to 31st January*	28th February	15th March
From 1st February to 31st March*	With 75 days of application	Within 90 days of application

*Portal shall remain open only for submission of applications for scholarships for courses where admission is after November.

11.4 There shall be no delays in payment of the scholarships. For this purpose the State shall ensure that their installments are disbursed to the students by the timelines defined in previous para so that the Central share can also be released in time.

11.5 The Ministry of Social Justice vide notification number 428 dated Feb,16,2017 has notified Aadhaar as identity document under Section 7 of Aadhaar Act 2016 for all Scholarship Schemes w.e.f. 16th February 2017.

11.6 The authentication through Aadhaar would be compulsory at the time of renewals, if not provided earlier at the time of admission.

12. Duration and Renewal of Awards

12.1 The award once made will be payable up to the completion of the course subject to satisfactory academic performance and attendance of 75% in every academic year. The attendance will be verified through Aadhaar based attendance System.

12.2 If a scholar is unable to appear in the annual examination owing to illness, the award may be renewed subject to production of medical certificate from prescribed authority and acceptance of the same by institution /college.

12.3 If, according to the Regulations of a University/Institution, a student is promoted to the next higher class even though he/she may not have actually passed in lower class and is

required to take examination of the junior class again after sometime, he/she will be entitled to scholarship for the class to which he/she is promoted if the student is otherwise eligible for scholarship. Further, in case a student fails in any class and then again joins the same class as a regular student, he/she will be eligible for scholarship for one additional year or the actual period, .whichever is lower.

13. IT Framework

13.1.   The scheme shall be run on an online platform with robust cyber security measures that would assure transparency, accountability, efficiency, and timely delivery of the assistance without any delays. The National Scholarship Portal (NSP) would be suitably modified for this purpose.

13.2.   If any State is already a running online portal that fulfils all the laid down parameters, they can continue with it, but share the data on real-time basis to the National Scholarship Portal or any other portal as specified by the Department of Social Justice & Empowerment in due course through instructions for enabling constant monitoring. Therefore, all States/UTs implementing the scheme will migrate to online processing of disbursal of scholarships, where not already done. The scholarship portal should mandatorily have the following features:

   a) The IT portal shall be integrated with the AISHE/UDISE portal for pulling the data about the institution in which the student has taken admission.

   b) At the time of registration for Freeship Card, every student should provide an Aadhaar ID/Aadhaar EID and other alternative form of ID as per this Ministry's notification no. 428 dated 16.02.2017 which will enable elimination of duplication and false claims. The Aadhaar authentication is mandatory in case of renewals, if not provided at the time of admission. The Aadhaar number entered by the students should go through demo-auth on real-time basis before allowing entry into the registration portal.

   c) The States shall undertake fool-proof verification of the eligibility, caste status, Aadhaar identification and bank account details on the online portal.

   d) There shall be no upload of any documents or any certificates into the system. All data should be auto-verified by linking databases through digilocker or any such

mechanism, such as (i) school boards' results, including the CBSE/ICSE along with the certificates maintained by them; (ii) database of income certificates, domicile and caste certificates issued by State/District Administration and (iii) databases maintained by the Universities and Colleges, using Aadhaar number as the link.

e) All verification process of the students should be done using the above authenticated databases automatically using the digital process with little or no manual intervention. There should be no system of verification by the institutions or even the district level officers. Till such time such a system is put in place, the manual verification shall be completed within 30 days from the date of application, with a provision for 'presumed approval' if the same is not completed within 30 days.

f) A suitable system will be put in place for taking Aadhaar based attendance system which is non-intrusive and automatic. Till such a system is finalized by the Central Govt., the institution shall upload the attendance of the scholarship holder every month in the Attendance module that would be developed in the IT system.

g) There shall be no system of calling for the bank account details of the students and authenticating it. All payments should preferably go through Aadhaar Based Payment System (APB – Aadhaar Payment Bridge) after checking the Aadhaar number with the NPCI mapper.

h) The renewals should be automatic based on promotion to the next class and having the required attendance, subject to confirmation of the student having joined back the same course as hosteller/day scholar, as the case may be. There should not be any requirement for the student to apply for renewals.

i) A performance module to monitor the progress of student as well as performance of the institution should be suitably designed and incorporated.

j) Apart from this, the States shall maintain a complete database of the beneficiaries under various other scholarship schemes to ensure de-duplication of the beneficiaries.

k) The portal shall incorporate an online grievance redressal mechanism linking all the authorities responsible for implementation on the scholarship portal.

l) There shall be a provision indicating the students of the poorest households, as per the parameters provided under the Scheme, selected for scholarship.

m) The portal will make arrangements so that the students, once declared blacklisted, may not be able to apply for scholarship again.

14. Annual Action Plan

14.1   Every participating State/UT, on or before 28th February of the preceding year, will prepare a State level Annual Plan for the PMS-SC scheme. In case the State has any other initiative on similar lines to PMS-SC, this may be mentioned separately in the Action Plan. The Action Plan should give clearly the targets, eligibility, proposed coverage separately for poorest households, processes for identification, identification of courses having employment potential, systems for monitoring etc.

14.2   The Department will constitute an Project Appraisal Committee to appraise and approve the Annual Action Plans. These plans would be appraised at the Centre and the outlay for each State would be finalized before 15th April, of every year as per the annual increase indicated under the funding pattern. The constitution of the committee will be informed through separate instructions.

15. Performance of the States/UTs

15.1   The performance of the States/UTs would be measured annually on certain parameters like (i) payments as per the given time schedule (ii) coverage from the poorest households (iii) academic outcomes of the scholarship-holders (iv) Implementation of Aadhaar based attendance (v) Digitization of various certificates required for determining eligibility etc.

15.2.   The States/UTs would be ranked on the above parameters and top performing States will be awarded. The details in this regard will be prepared after consultations, and will be shared through instructions in due course.

16.   Announcement of the Scheme by States/UTs

16.1   All the State Governments/UT Administrations will announce starting from April, the details of the Scheme and invite applications by issuing an advertisement in the leading newspapers of the State and through their respective websites/ Scholarship portals and other modes of media. The applicant should submit the completed application to the prescribed authority on the portal specified for this purpose before the last date prescribed for receipt of applications.

17.   Process of Registration and Application for the student

17.1 The student shall, well before the expected date of admission, register on the online on scholarship portal for issue of a Freeship Card as detailed in Para 8.2 of these Guidelines.

17.2 On admission to the institution to a course mentioned in the Freeship Card, the student shall apply, on the day of the admission itself, for scholarship, giving details of the Freeship card and the course and institution admitted to.

17.3 Students continuing their courses for which they have already been sanctioned scholarship in the previous year, i.e. renewal students, shall, be automatically renewed for scholarship as detailed in para 8.7.

18. Evaluation/Social Audit and follow up action

18.1. There shall be thorough evaluation of the outcomes of the scheme in regular intervals to ascertain the effectiveness of scheme implementation and for tracking the progress of the students. This may include conduct of social audits once a year, annual third-party evaluation, and half-yearly self-audited reports from each institution.

18.2. The social audits are to be conducted by the Social Audit Units of the State Governments formed by the Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India duly meeting the cost from the administrative cost of the scheme.

18.3. The State Government shall also set up a robust monitoring mechanism for monitoring the academic progress of the students enrolled to the scheme.

18.4. The students who are found to be lagging behind should be provided remedial coaching so that their academic outcome shall not be less than the average academic outcomes. The State Action Plan should contain clear provisions for this.

18.5. In order to ensure proper accountability, physical verifications at various levels viz. Block/District/State levels shall be done by the States/UTs covering at least 10% of the institutions/students, chosen randomly through an algorithm. All private institutions offering courses at the level of graduation or above shall, however, be mandatorily inspected annually.

19. Administrative Charges

19.1. The administrative cost for administration, monitoring and evaluation shall be limited to 1% of the annual outlay.

19.2. Each State/UT shall project the requirement of funds for undertaking the monitoring of the implementation, in its Annual Action Plan. In case, funds are required for Book,

these may be indicated under the Administrative charges. This would be considered by the PAC, ensuring that the total outflow on this count does not exceed 1% of the annual outlay.

19.3. The PAC shall give first priority in approving administrative charges for development of IT infrastructure, setting up of Technical Support Group cum Project Monitoring Unit at the Central/State level and social audits.

20. Mechanism for redressal of grievances

20.1. There shall be an online grievance redressal mechanism linking all the authorities responsible for implementation on the scholarship portal.

20.2. The student shall be able to lodge a grievance either through the portal or by a mobile app.

20.3. Every institution shall have a Grievance Redressal Officer (GRO) who is responsible for entertaining the grievances and resolving them by following up with the appropriate authority.

20.4. The non-resolution of the grievance at the institution level in a given time frame shall automatically be escalated to the district and later to the State level for resolution.

21. Other Conditions for the Award

21.1. If a student is found to have obtained a scholarship by false statements, his/ her scholarship will be cancelled forthwith and the amount of the scholarship paid will be recovered, at the discretion of the concerned State Government. The student concerned will be blacklisted and debarred for scholarship in any scheme forever.

21.2. A scholarship awarded may be cancelled if the scholar changes the subject of the course of study for which the scholarship was originally awarded or changes the institution of study, without prior approval of the State Government. The Head of the Institution shall report such cases to the State which will stop payment of the scholarship money. The amount already paid may also be recovered at the discretion of the State Government.

21.3. A scholar is liable to refund the scholarship amount at the discretion of the State Government, if during the course of the year, the studies for which the scholarship has been awarded, is discontinued by him/her.

21.4. The provisions of this scheme can be changed at any time at the discretion of the Government of India.

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The following important parameters should be contained in the FREE SHIP CARD

Name of the Student

Student's ID on the portal

Fathers' Name-

Aadhaar Card Number-

Caste

Date of Birth

Annual Family income

Domicile State-

Address of the Student

Course (in which admission is sought)-

Duration of Course-

Class (presently studying)-

Class (Last class previously studied)-

Major provisions of the scheme

Student's undertaking to reimburse the amount to institution within 7 days after receipt of scholarship

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS
NEW DELHI.
***

POST MATRIC SCHOLARSHIP
(CENTRALLY SPONSORED SCHEME)

FOR THE STUDENTS BELONGING TO
SCHEDULED TRIBE FOR STUDIES IN INDIA

REGULATION GOVERNING THE AWARD OF SCHOLARSHIP
(APPLICABLE FROM 01-04-2022)

CONTENTS

1. Introduction

It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme implemented by Ministry of Tribal Affairs to grant scholarship to eligible ST students for pursuing higher education starting from class XI to Post Graduation courses in India.

2. Objective

a. To enable eligible Scheduled Tribe students to undertake quality education from Post Matric to Post Graduate level by providing them financial assistance.
b. To create an error free platform ensuring that the targeted beneficiaries receive scholarship on time.

3. Salient features of the Scheme

3.1. Scope

Scholarship under the Scheme will be available to ST students for studies in Indiaand will be directly transferred to the account of students. The scholarship will be awarded by the Government of the State/Union Territory to which the applicant belongs as per the terms of domicile decided by the State/UT.

3.2. Conditions of eligibility

a. The student should belong to Scheduled Tribe so specified in relation to the State/Union Territory to which he/she actually belongs (Domicile State).
b. Student should have passed the Matriculation or Higher Secondary or any higher examination of a recognized University or Board of Secondary Education.
c. The family income of student from all sources should not exceed Rs.2.50 lakh per annum.
d. The student should have a valid account in a Schedule Bank linked with Aadhar and Mobile number.
e. The student should not be getting any other scholarship.
f. The scholarships will be given for study of recognized post-matriculation/ post-secondary courses, recognized by the concerned approving authority, pursued in following category of Institutions/Universities/Colleges.

    i. All Government Institutes/Colleges/Universities
    ii. Institutions of National Importance;

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iii. Central University/ State university/ Autonomous colleges recognizedby UGC and Universities/ Colleges recognized under section 2(f) and/or 12(b) of UGC Act;

iv. Deemed Universities;

v. Private Universities recognized by State/Centre with 'A' level or equivalent accreditation by NAAC, NBA;

vi. Private Professional Institutions affiliated to a recognized Central/State University

vii. Schools /colleges recognized by Govt/Govt aided for Classes XI to class XII;

viii. Diploma granting Institutions as recognized by State/UT Governments;

ix. Vocational Training Institute affiliated to National Council of Vocational Training (NCVT);

x. Institutions affiliated/approved by the appropriate bodies like MCI/AICTE etc or any regulatory body established by State/Centre as approving authority for particular course.

Note 1: Under "National fellowship & Scholarship for Higher Education of ST students" Scheme [Top class Scholarship], MoTA is providing Scholarships to students for pursuing graduation and post-graduation courses in Top Class Institutes (currently 252) across India. To avoid duplicity, **students pursuing courses in such Institutes will not be entitled for benefit under Post Matric Scholarship***. All students already registered under Post Matric Schemes till 2020-21 will however continue to be funded under the scheme till completion of course. The new students admitted after issuance of guidelines will be registered under the scholarship component of the "National fellowship & Scholarship for Higher Education of ST students" Scheme from academic year 2021-22.* List of 252 Top Class Institutes is given in the website of the Ministry (tribal.nic.in).

Note 2: State Governments/UTs will gradually shift towards institutions to be covered which ranks high as per NIRF of Ministry of Education for Post-matric scholarship scheme so as to ensure better employability.

3.2.1. Candidates who complete a course in one stream will not be eligible to take diploma/degree course of different stream. For example, student will not be eligible for scholarship for pursuing B. Com after completing B.A or BSC or MBBS after doing B.Tech.

3.2.2. Scholarship holder under this scheme can hold only one scholarship/stipend at a time. If awarded any other scholarship/stipend, the student can exercise his/her option for either of the two scholarships/stipends, whichever is more beneficial to him/her and

should inform the awarding authority through the Head of the Institution about the option made.

3.3. Income Criteria

Scholarships will be paid to the students whose family income from all sources does not exceed *Rs.2,50,000/- (Rs. Two lakh fifty thousand only)* per annum**.**

The family income shall be computed in the following manner: -

I. In case where both father and mother are working, the combined income of both of them from all sources shall be taken into account in computing total family income.

II. In case any other member of the family, other than father and mother is an earning member, his or her income shall not be included in computing total family income.

III. In case only one parent is alive, the income of that parent shall be taken into account for considering total family income. If other sibling or family member is an earning member, their income shall not be included in computing total family income.

IV. In case of an orphan, supported by a guardian, income criteria shall not apply.

Note 1: Definition of Income - Income means gross income including income from all sources without any exemption and deductions available in the Income Tax Act.

Note 2: Income certificate is required to be taken once only i.e. at the time of admission to course which will be valid for the entire duration of the course. At the time of renewal in second or subsequent year of the course, fresh income certificateis not required.

Note 3: The income certificate given at the time of admission should be taken in the same year for which the admission is taken. In the case of salaried employee, the income of previous financial year will be considered for the purpose of eligibility. For example, if candidate applies afresh for academic year 2021-22, the family income for financial year 2020-21 would be required.

3.4. Value of scholarship

The scholarship will have two components, payment of compulsory non-refundable fees for the course pursued by the student and the monthly stipend.

3.4.1. Fee component:

The fee component will depend on type of course pursued by the student. The courses have been divided in 4 categories.

Table 1

Group	Courses
Group I	Graduate and Post Graduate courses leading to Degree, PG Diploma, MPhil, PhD in professional courses in various streams
Group II	All non-professional recognized courses leading to a Graduate, Post Graduate Degree not covered under Group I in Arts, Science and Commerce like BA/B.Sc/B.Com or MA/MSc/M.Com etc
Group III	Vocational stream, ITI courses, 3 year diploma courses in Polytechnics, etc.
Group IV	All post-matriculation level non-degree courses for which entrance qualification is High School (Class X), e,g. senior secondary certificate (class XI and XII).

Note 1: The fee component will be decided by the State Level Fee Fixation Committee of the state. In case of students studying in private sector institutes there will be a ceiling of Rs.2.50 lakhs per annum per student for Engineering Courses and Rs.6.00 lakh per annum for MBBS/ MS/ MD courses and Rs.1.00 lakh per annum for other courses as far as support of Government of India is concerned. However, the concerned State Government/UT Administration is free to provide scholarship over and above the limit specified above to students studying in private sector Institutes. For accounting purpose, such additional amount, if any, would be accounted for separately in the State portal.

Note 2: The guidelines will apply prospectively for students taking fresh admission from 1.4.2022. It is clarified that existing students who have enrolled themselves in a particular course within or outside State as per the prevailing guidelines at the time of admission will continue to get the benefit in respect of fee fixed by the State for the remaining period of the course. The new guidelines will be applicable in respect of students who apply in Post Matric Scholarship Scheme on or after 1.4.2022.

3.4.2. Stipend:

The student will be entitled to stipend as per rates listed below.

Table:2

Group	Courses	Hostellers		Day Scholar	
		Monthly	Annually	Monthly	Annually
Group I	Bachelor, Master Degree, MPhil/PhD degree leading to Degree, PG Diploma, in professional courses in various streams	1200	12000	550	5500
Group II	All non-professional recognized courses leading to a Bachelor, MasterDegree, MPhil/PhD degree not covered under Group I in Arts, Science and Commerce like BA/B.Sc/B.Com or MA/MSc/M.Com	820	8200	530	5300
Group III	Vocational stream, ITI courses, 3 year diploma courses in Polytechnics, etc.	570	5700	300	3000
Group-IV	All post-matriculation level non-degree courses for which entrance qualification is High School (Class X), e.g. senior secondary certificate (class XI and XII).	380	3800	230	2300

Note 1: It needs to be clarified that the stipend is a sort of incentive provided to a student for pursuing a particular course and in no way meant to provide for reimbursement of boarding and lodging charges like mess, hostel or other similar charges. The stipend will be given to the student as per rates according to course listed in Group-I to IV. However, the concerned State Government/UT Administrationis free to provide the stipend over and above the prescribed rates of the scheme. For accounting purpose, such additional amount, if any, would be accounted for separately in the State portal.

Note 2: *In order to provide quality boarding and lodging facility to students within and outside States/UTs, all States/UTs are advised to identify cities where such Institutes are located that do not have availability of hostel. The States may seek grants from SCA to TSS/275(1) for construction of tribal hostels within and outside State. Such hostels will however be open for students of all States.*

Note3: *Normally the term 'Hostel' is applicable to a common residential building and a common mess for the students run under the supervision of the educational institution authorities. In case the college authorities are unable to provide accommodation in the college Hostel, an approved place of residence can also be treated as Hostel for the purpose of this scheme. The place will be approved by the Head of the Institution after due inspection and keeping in view the rules and regulations laid down by the University, if any. In such case, a certificate to the effect that the student is residing in an approved place of residence as he is unable to get accommodation in the college hostel should be furnished by the Head of the Institution.*

It is further clarified that such deemed hostels should consist of such accommodation as is hired at least by a group of 5 (five) students living together, usually with common mess arrangements.

Note 4: ***Additional Disability Allowance: -****In addition to stipend provided in Table-2 above, an additional Stipend of Rs. 800/-per month (Rs. 9600 annually) will be given to the Divyangjan student who is hosteller and Rs.600 (Rs 7200 annually) to Day scholar. The disability as defined under the relevant 'Disabilities Act' has to be certified by competent medical authority of the State Govt./UT Administration. The provisions of Disability allowance will also apply to leprosy-cured and students having sickle cell Anemia or Thalassemia as notified by Ministry of Social Justiceand empowerment*

4. Empanelment of Institutions/universities/colleges within and outside states

a. It would be the responsibility of the State to empanel the eligible Institutes within and outside states where student can take admission. Students will be free to take admission in any Government School/ Institute/College/University within and outside the domicile State. In respect of Non- Government Schools/ Institutes/Colleges/Universities located within and outside domicile State, each State would empanel and prepare a list of such Non-Government Institutes and the courses for which such Institutes are eligible as per Group-I to IV. States would share such list with MoTA on its portal.

b. The state Govt. shall ensure that empanelled Non- Government Schools/ Institutes/Colleges/Universities located inside and outside the state possess

desired Infrastructure and has capacity to provide quality education. A mechanism will be devised for Inspection of such Institutes by domicile State in coordination with respective destination state where such Institute is located.

c. State Government before awarding scholarship to a student will verify registration, affiliation and accreditation, courses being offered and number of seats approved for each course in Schools/ Institutes/Colleges/Universities.

d. In the application form, it will be mentioned that the student is studying in an Institute outside the State/UT and data in respect of that Institute along with necessary affiliation and accreditation will be captured in online form.

e. The concerned Non-Government School/ Institute/College will not force the student to pay the fee if there is delay in disbursement of scholarship to student. It would be the responsibility of concerned State Government to ensure that the student is allowed to sit in the exams and attend classes even if there is delay in payment of fee by State Government. State may take such Undertaking from the Institutes at the time of empanelling them. The State will however ensure that any grievance of such School/Institute/College/University is addressed on priority. State may create special cell in Scholarship Division for empanelment, inspection and grievance redressal of such Non-Government School/ Institute/College, for which expenditure can be incurred from administrative expenses provided under the scheme as discussed in para 14 of guidelines.

f. The state may decide whether the entire fee will be credited to the account of student by DBT mode or the tuition fee may go to Institute and the stipend to the student.

5. Selection of candidates

i. All States/UTs are required to develop an Online Platform for inviting online applications and disbursement through DBT mode into the bank account of student. The states/UTs have option to opt for National Scholarship Portal for inviting such applications, if State/UT does not have own portal.

ii. The States/UTs would obtain necessary documents from applicants in support of eligibility of the applicants. Any student found to have stated wrong facts and misrepresented facts would become ineligible and debarred from any benefits of the scheme.

iii.   Before initiating registration process, students are advised to carefully go through the instructions of State /NSP portal and take care of the following:

a) Candidates belonging to one State (Domicile State) but studying in other State will be awarded scholarships by the State to which they belong (domicile State) and will submit their applications to the competent authorities in their domicile State. The student can take admission in any Government Institute within or outside the state. As far as Non-Government Institutes are concerned, the students can take admission only in empanelled Institutes within and outside state as discussed in para 4(a) above.

b) The Bank Account details (A/c Number, IFSC Code) given in application is correct and keep the account active (i.e. non-dormant). The account should be held in the name of the student and linked with Aadhar and Mobile number to ensure timely DBT payment.

c) The resolution/quality of documents and photo uploaded is adequate and document is legible and clear.

d) The mobile number provided in the application is correct, active and belongs to the applicant or the parent. The student should preferably continue the same mobile number linked with the bank account for entire period of course.

e) The student/applicant should take timely action(s) on the SMS received from State owned portal/NSP

f) The applicant should follow up with Institutes for application verification before the deadlines.

g) The applicant should rectify the error(s) and comply with the remarks made in the application in case the application is marked as defective in State owned portal/NSP.

5.1. Role of Institute Nodal Officer (INO)

There will be a Nodal Officer for every Institute. The Institute Nodal officer using portal must adhere to the following:

a. The Nodal officer get registered in the portal with valid documents issued by the Institute

b. The Institute/School shall possess a valid AISHE/U-DISE/NCVT/SCVT code, before registering on the portal. In case the institute is not registered, the Nodal Officer can add it by providing the requisite details.

c. The primary role of the Institute Nodal officer is 1st Level verification of the applications submitted by applicants at portal. The Institute Nodal officer must verify the correctness of details in the application form and uploaded documents submitted by the student/ applicant, and maintain physical copies of supporting documents submitted by the student/ applicant. The District/State/Ministry Nodal Officer can ask for copies of these documents from the Institute Nodal Officers, as and when required.

d. The Institute Nodal officer has the option to either verify the application, reject the application or make the application defective. In case she/he chooses to reject or defect the application, the reasons for rejection or defect must be provided, so that the same can be displayed to the student/applicant.

5.2. Role of District/ State Nodal Officer

The primary role of District/ State Nodal officer is to verify the documents at second/third Level.

i. The District/ State Nodal Officer shall verify the correctness of details in the application form and uploaded documents submitted by the student/applicant as per guidelines of the related scheme.

ii. The District / State Nodal officer can either verify the application, make the Application defective or reject the application giving reason.

iii. The District / State Level Nodal officer shall monitor overall pendency of the applications for the scheme at Institute Level.

iv. The District / State Nodal officer shall ensure that the applications are scrutinized well-in-time by the Institute, thus avoiding the last-minute rush to verify the applications, that the same can be displayed to the student/applicant.

5.3. Role of Ministry:

The primary role of the Ministry is to monitor the overall progress of the scheme. The Ministry shall provide the guidelines to the States/UTs and for development of portal as per the requirements of the Ministry.

a. The Ministry shall provide PFMS configuration details (agency ID, Agency name, PFMS scheme code, DBT mission code, beneficiary type, payment purpose code) to States/UTs

b. The Ministries shall verify the correctness of Scheme configuration, including but not limited to the eligibility criteria, important dates etc.

c. The Ministries shall provide proper IT platform to facilitate state to upload beneficiary data on its portal and would issue necessary instructions to States/UTs.

6. Documents required: Students need to carefully go through State/ NSP portal for required documents to be uploaded with the application form as mentioned in clause 3 of guidelines.

a. Aadhar Number

b. Domicile certificate

c. Scanned copy of certificates, diploma, degree etc. in respect of all examinations passed.

d. Last qualified marks [percentage/Equivalent percentage in case of CGPA/OGPA etc.]

e. ST certificate issued by competent authority of State/UT.

f. Family Income Certificate.

g. Disability certificate.

h. Scanned copy of the passport size photograph

The State/UT may specify the procedure for issuing ST certificate, family Income Certificate and Disability certificate and the competent authority to issue such certificate. If the State has online system of issuing such certificate including certificate of examination passed, State/UT may link the State/UT portal through Digi locker so that the certificates placed in Digi locker can be fetched automatically.

Note 1:-Self-declarations or affidavits of self-assessment of income shall not be acceptable and the State/UT Governments shall make appropriate arrangementsto notify a competent income-certificate issuing authority for this purpose.

6.1. All States/UTs are required to establish a dedicated Helpdesk/Grievance redressal mechanism to address the students' query. The primary role of the Helpdesk at State/UT level is to provide first level assistance to the users at various levels of portal. The States/UTs shall:

a. Assist the student(s)/applicant(s) for filling the registration and application forms and provide technical support for queries on fee,Institution details etc.

b. Escalate the critical issues to State/NSP team, as and when required.

6.2.   The States shall maintain a complete database of the beneficiaries under various other scholarship schemes to ensure de-duplication of the beneficiaries

7.   Duration and renewal of scholarship

i.   The scholarship will be payable for the entire course for which the application has been made.

ii.   In the application form student will be required to mention the duration ofcourse. The award once made will be tenable from the stage at which it is given till the completion of course subject to good conduct and regularity in attendance.

iii.   In case a student couldn't apply for scholarship for an eligible course in the 1st year of the course, he can apply for scholarship in 2nd or subsequent year and would be entitled for scholarship for the remaining duration of course from the date of application, subject to the eligibility.

iv.   The scholarship to a student will be renewed from year to year provided he/she has completed the previous class successfully and moves to the next class.

v.   In case he/she has failed in one year, he/she will not be entitled to scholarship till he/she clears that class and gets promoted to the next class.

vi.   However, if a student is unable to appear in the annual examination owing to illness and/or on account of any other unforeseen event, the award may be renewed for the next academic year on submission of medical certificate and/or other required sufficient proof to the satisfaction of the Head of the Institution and his/her certifying that the student would have passed had he/she appeared in the examination.

vii.   In accordance with the Regulations of a University/institution, if a student is promoted to the next higher class even though he/she may not have actually passed in lower class and is required to take examination of the junior class again after sometime, he/she will be entitled to scholarship for the class to which he/she is promoted if the student is otherwise eligible for scholarship.

v.   Stipend is payable from 1st April or from the month of admission, whichever is later, to the month in which the examinations are completed, at the end of the academic year for a maximum period of 10 months.

vi.   In case of renewal of scholarship awarded in the previous years, stipend will be paid from the month following the month up to which scholarship was paid in the previous year, if the course of study is continuous.

vii.   Scholarship will not be paid for the period of internship/houseman-ship in the M.B.B, S. course or for a practical training in other course if the student is in receipt of some remuneration during the internship period or some allowance/stipend during the practical training in other course.

viii.   The scholarship is dependent on the satisfactory progress and conduct of the scholars. If it is reported by the Head of the Institution at any time that a student has by reason of his/her own act of default failed to make satisfactory progress or has been guilty of misconduct such as resorting to or participatingin strikes, irregularity in attendance without permission of the authorities concerned etc., the authority sanctioning the scholarship may either cancel the scholarship or stop or withhold further payment for such period as it may think fit.

ix.   If a student is found to have obtained a scholarship by false statements, his/her scholarship will be cancelled forthwith and the amount of thescholarship paid will be recovered, at the discretion of the concerned State Government. The student concerned will be blacklisted and debarred for scholarship in any scheme forever.

x.   A scholarship awarded may be cancelled if the scholar changes the subject of the course of study for which the scholarship was originally awarded or changes the Institution of study, without prior approval of the State Government. The Head of the Institution shall report such cases to the respective States/UTs to stop payment of the scholarship money. The amount already paid may also be recovered at the discretion of the State Government.

xi.   A student is liable to refund the scholarship amount at the discretion of the State Government, if during the course of the year, the studies for which the scholarship has been awarded, is discontinued by him/her.

xii.   The regulations can be changed at any time at the discretion of the Government of India.

8. Announcement and timeline of the scheme

In order to ensure timely disbursement of Scholarship, it is necessary that States/UTs adhere to timelines for opening and closing of portal, verification of applications and disbursal of scholarship to students through DBT. State Governments/UT Administration will make all efforts to open the portal for inviting applications by 1st May. The State will be responsible for proper advertisement of the date of opening and closing of portal through print, social

and electronic media and all empanelled Institutions located outside the State are informed about opening and closing dates. The applicant should submit/upload the completed application to the prescribed authority before the last date prescribed for receipt of applications. The following timeline is suggested for opening, closing of portal, verification of students and Institute and disbursal of scholarship.

PROCESS	FRESH	RENEWAL
Registration for Students	1 April – 30th September	1 April– 30th September
Completion of verification of Institutes	30th October	30th October
Completion of verification by Institute/ State	15th November	
Disbursement of scholarship	31st December	15th November

The above-mentioned timelines are only suggestive. The State should make efforts that for the renewal students, the disbursement would start as and when the verification is complete.

Note 1: The State/UT may ensure that a dedicated cell under Scholarship Divisionis made which will be responsible for preparation of portal, grievance redressal in filling applications, integration of all Institutes including empanelled Institutes outside State with the portal, verification of documents and eligibility of student, course, checking of course fee and stipend, Aadhar linked bank account and disbursal of scholarship. The expenditure can be incurred from administrative expenses provided under the scheme as discussed in para 14 of guidelines.

9. Publicity & Inviting Application

The State Governments/U.T. Administrations suitably publicize the Schemeand invite applications by issuing an advertisement in local language, in the leading newspapers of the State and through their respective websites and other media outfits. The awareness programme may also be arranged in coordination with Civil Society Organization (CSOs)/NGOS/PRIs/any other stake holders.

10. Funding pattern of the scheme

The Scheme is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme implemented by the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations. The contribution from Government of India would be 75% and the state contribution would be 25%. In respect of North East states and hilly states, the contribution from Government of India would be 90% and the state contribution would be 10%. In case of UTs like Andaman & Nicobar without Legislative Assembly and own grants, Govt. of India's contribution will be 100%.

10.1.   It is the endeavor of the Ministry to transfer scholarship to the students by DBT mode preferably using the Aadhar Enabled Payment System. The Ministry will devise a mechanism with NSP so that the Central share in the scheme can bereleased on DBT mode directly into the bank accounts of the students in consultation with states. The states will be required to complete necessary verification of the student at Institute, District and State level. After necessary verification, the state will share the data of the eligible students to the NSP, who in turn will release the amount to the bank account of the student. Necessary instructions in this regard will be issued after consultation with states. Till the time said mechanism is developed, the Central share of scholarship will be transferred to the states and the states/UTswith their contribution would disburse the scholarship amount through DBT directly in the bank account of the student.

11. Procedure for claiming and release of central assistance

(i).   Central Assistance will be released to the States/UTs, in two or more instalments depending on availability of the funds and compliance by the State/UT as per General Financial Rules. Central Assistance would be released as per the guidelines issued by the Department of Expenditure (DoE), Ministry of Finance from time to time. The states will be required to comply with following conditions: -

   a) The State has utilized the amount given in previous year and has submitted Utilization Certificate (UC).
   b) The amount has been disbursed to beneficiaries and the expenditure is reflected in PFMS.
   c) The State has also contributed their share in previous year corresponding to Central Share.
   d) The state has submitted a Statement of Expenditure (SOE) of previous year, amount actually utilized supported by utilization certificate.
   e) The state has opened the portal for inviting online applications.
   f) The State has submitted estimated expenditure based on the actual expenditure of previous year.

(ii).   Based on availability of funds and compliance by State/UT in respect of utilization of funds granted in previous year, the Central Share may be released to State/UT as per guidelines of DoE for timely disbursal of scholarship.

(iii). The final instalment would be released to state on submission Utilization Certificate (UC) of the grants already released and the amount has been disbursed to beneficiaries and the expenditure is reflected in PFMS.   The state would also submit statement of expenditure giving details of total liability including central and state share.

12. Monitoring & Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation is used to assess the performance of the scheme and to ensure that the objectives for which the scheme is initiated are achieved. The purpose of monitoring and Evaluation is to improve current and future management of outputs, outcomes and impact. In this regard, DBT Mission has framed guidelines which have the following important components:

i.   IT based system to ensure transparency for inviting application, verification and disbursal of funds.
ii.   Data should capture beneficiary information, including **Aadhar Number and integrate with Aadhar CIDR.**
iii.   The States/UTs should follow **Local Government Directory (LGD)** standard
iv.   Institutions should use DISE/AISHE code.
v.   Bank account should be linked with Aadhar and Integrated with PFMS/State Treasury
vi.   Ministry to develop their own Scheme MIS
vii. The States/UTs to share beneficiary data in uniform **data exchange format**
viii. The State/UT Should integrate with DBT Bharat Portal for monthly reporting of data

12.1.   In compliance of above guidelines, MoTA has developed DBT portal (dbttribal.gov.in) and has designed uniform data exchange format in consultation with States/UTs and DBT Mission. Portal has the following features:

I.   Data sharing Modules to upload data through Webservices, Excel/CSV or manual data entry.
II.   Communication Module for speedy communication with States/UTs. The module has given facility to States/UTs to upload, UC, SOE and other documents. There is facility to send bulk messages and email to State and notification when a document is uploaded on notice board.
III.   Grievance Module: States can register technical query regarding issues pertaining to uploading of data, change of users, change in Log In ID and PW

or grievances relating to release of funds, mismatch of fund and beneficiary statements etc.

IV. Dynamic dashboard based on information shared by states in respect of beneficiaries and fund release for regular monitoring by States and MoTA.

12.2. In compliance of above guidelines, MoTA has developed DBT portal (dbttribal.gov.in) and has designed uniform data exchange format in consultation with States/UTs and DBT Mission. The Ministry will issue separate instructions to the state with regard to

(i). Use of DBT portal/NSP Portal for data sharing.
(ii). Integration of DBT/NSP Portal with State Portal,
(iii). Standardization of data,
(iv). Data Sharing Format
(v). MIS reports and Dashboard.

12.3. In case any fraudulent use of funds is detected, it would be the responsibility of the State/UT to get an enquiry conducted within a specific time limit. The State/UT will share the outcome of the enquiry to MOTA. The State will provide necessary support including provision of data, beneficiary details to monitoring Agency engaged by Evaluation and Monitoring Division of MoTA/ Development, Monitoring and Evaluation Office (DMEO) division of NITI Aayog or any other Central Agency required to review Output-Outcome or performance of the scheme.

12.3. MoTA will devise a mechanism to have periodic evaluation of the scheme through a specialized agency in coordination with State Government.

13. Transitory provision for existing beneficiaries

Identified beneficiaries of scholarships under the existing Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme for STs will also get the benefit of the revised rate of scholarship from effective date of revision of the scheme. As stated above against Note-2 to the table under para 3.4.1, existing students who have enrolled themselves in a particular course within or outside State as per the prevailing guidelines at the time of admission will continue to get the benefit in respect of fee fixed by the State for the remaining period of the course.

14. Central and State PMU

In order to ensure proper implementation of Scholarship scheme as per scheme guidelines, Government of India will provide funds for setting up CentralPMU and funds to State for setting up State PMU for which separate guidelines willbe issued.

Role of State PMU

     I.   Maintenance and upkeep of State portal,

    II.   Data sharing requirement of DBT Mission,

   III.   Fund accountability requirement of PFMS,

   IV.   Output outcome requirement of NITI Aayog

    V.   grievance redressal mechanism,

   VI.   Integration of all Institutes including empanelled Institutes outside State with the portal,

  VII.   helpline for resolving students' query,

 VIII.   Examination of data analysis reports prepared by MoTA.

Role of Central PMU

a). Portal and Data requirements:

    I.   Maintenance and upkeep of DBT portal,
   II.   data sharing requirement with States including development of web services for DBT. States, NSP States and NSP Portal
  III.   web Services for Darpan, PMO and Performance Dashboard.
  IV.   Data Analytics and MIS reports.

     a) Field visit and enquiry in case of evidence of misappropriation or misutilization of funds.
     b) Interaction and capacity building of states though Video Conferencing, Training.
     c) Engagement of professional agency for Periodical Monitoring & Evaluation of scheme as per requirement.

15. Change in the provisions of the scheme

The provisions of this Scheme can be changed at any time with the approval of Minister of Tribal Affairs, Government of India.

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