



#### **4.3.1: List of Learner Support Services provided at Head Quarter, Regional Centers and Learner Support Centers**

The learner support services are crucial to the success of Open and distance learning and Open University system.

- There is a three-tier structure, *i.e.* the University headquarters (HQ) at Nashik, the 8 Regional Centers (RCs) at District head quarter and the 1711 Learner Support Centers (LSCs) in Higher Education Institutions in colleges, technical & professional institutions including 1342 Learner support centers of UG and PG Programs and 369 centers for certificate and diploma programs, offering similar programs of equivalent level in conventional mode.
- **At University Level:** The Student Services Division (SSD) is the main Division for providing learner support services through Regional Centers and Learner Support Centers.
- The SSD is operational since the inception of the university as an exclusive division at the headquarters, for managing the operations of RCs and LSCs. SSD manages and coordinates the support activities through a network of 8 RCs and 1711 LSCs in Maharashtra.
- During the COVID-19 situation in 2020-21, University with the help of Regional Centers conducted about 8058 online counseling sessions in place of regular face to face counseling sessions for all the programs during the year including online examination of all 56 academic programs including 12 UG and 12 PG Programs in operation.
- **At Regional Center Level:** The RCs comprise the middle level of the support services and act as the nodal office of the university in the region and manage the functioning of LSCs within its jurisdiction. It supervises the academic activities being performed at the LSCs under its operational area and ensures their provisions to the learners as per university norms and guidelines. The RCs are entrusted with the following core responsibilities:
  - creating awareness by promotion and publicity of programs;
  - distribution of learning materials;
  - organization of staff development programs;
  - resource center and contact point for the region;
  - pre-admission counseling;
  - attending to learner queries and grievance redressal;
  - supervision and coordination of induction meetings at LSCs;
  - monitoring of counseling sessions (both theory and practical) at LSC;
  - monitoring of assignment and evaluation at LSCs;
  - supervision of the conduct of term end examinations at exam centers;
- **At Student Support Center Level:** The third level is the LSC, where teaching learning is transacted through academic counseling (tutoring) sessions for both theory, practical and project type of courses with the support of the academic counselors empanelled from amongst the faculty of the host institution (HEI). Practical sessions are arranged at selected LSCs in specialized laboratories as per

program requirements to provide hands on learning experience for the learners enrolled in practical / skill based programs. In addition, the LSCs are entrusted to perform the following functions:

- provide support services such as informing, advising and counseling to the learners;
- promotion and publicity of academic programs;
- pre- admission counseling;
- organization and conduct of induction meetings;
- conduct of academic counseling for theory, practical and project courses ;
- collection and evaluation of assignments;
- arrange and conduct of term end examination;
- organizing course related workshops and seminars; and
- Providing library support to the learners.

The School of Studies in the university has brought out Manuals for Learner Support Center Management (Manual for Study Center Management) for standardizing the operational procedures for smooth and effective functioning.

Databases are maintained for effective management of learner support at all levels.

- Apart from aforementioned classifications, Learner support services is also provided through some operational divisions at the headquarters such as:
  - Student Registration Section,
  - Schools of Studies,
  - Student Evaluation Division,
  - Print Production Center (PPC)
  - Audio Video Center (AVC)

Keeping in tune with the advancement in information and communication technology (ICT) the following ICT enabled support is also provided to the learners:

- Educational programs on a variety of subjects through YashVani-Web Radio Programs to enhance learning processes.
- Web Enabled Academic Support is also provided to learners to enhance the learning experience of the learners. As mentioned above grievance redressal is also provided through a web based portal to the learners.
- Web based platform is also provided for receiving various learners queries.



  
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