



Concept Paper for Establishment of Centre for Student Accessibility Services

University of Vavuniya

Sri Lanka

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1.0 Background

The University of Vavuniya was initiated as Northern Province Affiliated University College in 1991 and upgraded as a Vavuniya Campus in 1997. It was upgraded as the 17th independent University of Sri Lanka on August 1st 2021. Last thirty years, this institution has provided higher education to the region and nation. The institution is located in the gateway of the north. Now, this new university is planning to develop its human, physical and financial resources to improve its quality of academic services to future generations. As a part of it, it is planning to establish a Centre for Student Accessibility Services.

2.0 Justification

The purpose of establishing the Centre is to facilitate the differentially abled to carry out their day-to-day activities and support them to earn their living. It is understood that the international community is always encouraging the schools, higher education institutions, including universities, to protect and promote the rights of education of students with disability. Since Sri Lanka had signed the United Nations Convention of Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCRPD) in 2007 and the Sri Lankan parliament had ratified it in 2016, all universities have a great obligation to protect the education rights of the differently-abled students prescribed in article no. 24 of UNCRPD.

At its 1044th meeting held on 03rd December 2020; University Grants Commission approved to establish a student support center for students with special needs in the university system to provide necessary facilities to pursue their higher studies.

Further, the University Grants commission letter dated April 19th 2010 and April 20th 2018 and the letter from the Ministry of Higher Education dated July 07th 2011, emphasized to make a suitable arrangement such as walking ramps, arm holdings for washrooms, lifts etc. for all existing buildings and new buildings at all Higher Education Institutions according to the Disability Act No 28 of 1996 and its amendment No 33 of 2003.

Therefore, the University of Vavuniya strongly believes that if such a support center is established, it could provide various services such as human helpers, access to physical resources etc. in order to carry out smooth academic activities for the differently-abled people. Hence, it does hope to protect and promote the rights of education of the differently-abled through the established Centre for Student Accessibility Services.

3.0 Goal

The overall goal of establishing the Centre for Student Accessibility Services is to protect the education rights of differently-abled people by providing them barrier-free university society with environmental, attitudinal, communicational, cultural, institutional and policy settings.

4.0 Objectives

- a) To improve barrier-free access for differently-abled people in the university.
- b) To encourage all the stakeholders to take positive steps toward differently-abled
- c) To provide non-formal education for differently-abled people in the region.
- d) To empower all the stakeholders to contribute meaningful considerations to differently-abled people.
- e) To arrange cultural programs, sports, conferences, seminars, workshops, training programmes, research initiatives for students with special needs.
- f) To establish a network and interconnection with the national and international centers for the differently-abled.

5.0 Proposed interventions

- a) Allocating block of land for the center in the university.
- b) Constructing the buildings with full accessibility for the differently-abled people.
- c) Purchasing proper tools, equipment, furniture etc. for differently-abled people
- d) Reserving some percentage of cadre for qualified differently-abled people when filling vacancies.
- e) Making publicity for the center and its facilities among the students, staff, and public to make the center approachable and public to make the center approachable.
- f) Conducting sports activities for disabled students at regional and national levels.

6.0 Institutional Arrangement

The Centre for Student Accessibility Services is placed under the purview of the Vice-Chancellor, governed by a Management Committee headed by a director. The Director will be appointed from among the senior academic staff. Its administrative and financial management will be under the structure of the management committee. The Director shall be assisted by an Assistant Registrar and one Management Assistant. The management committee of the Centre for Student Accessibility Services will consist of 07 members

comprising a director of the centre, one representative as the UGC appointed council member, one representative of the Senate, three representatives of the differently-abled students with at least one female student and one male student and one person from outside the University. The Council shall approve the management committee with the recommendation of the Senate.

The power of the executive authority of the center shall be vested to the management committee. The management of the center's activities, including administration, finance, program management, and other development activities, shall be vested to the management committee.

7.0 Human Resources

The following human resources will be provided to the Centre.

1. Head of the center i.e Director
2. Center coordinator/disability adviser/psychosocial counsellor
3. Computer instructor
4. Technicians (3)
5. Office staff

8.0 Physical resources

The following physical resources will be provided to the Centre.

1. Building with accessibility facilities for the differently-abled people
2. Computers with needed software
3. Other tools and equipment
4. Furniture
5. Other office item

9.0 Budget

The financial requirement for the center for three years is tabulated below:

SN	Description	Amount in Million Rs.
01	Building construction	100.0
02	Equipment & Furniture	4.0
03	Remuneration to staff on contract (until new cadre approved) Director (Part-time) (36 months x 25,000/-) Co-ordinator (36 months x 15,000/-) Computer instructor (36 months x 30,000/-) Management Assistant (Trainee) (36 months x 30,000/-) Office Aide (ad hoc basis) (36 months x 20,000/-)	4.0
Total		108.0