F.N. PP001/14/2024-PP (e- 10280)

भारत सरकार,
कार्मिक, लोक शिकायत तथा पेंशन मंत्रालय,
कार्मिक एवं प्रशिक्षण विभाग,
कर्मचारी चयन आयोग,
ब्लॉक सं-12, केन्द्रीय कार्यालय परिसर,
लोधी रोड, नई दिल्ली -110003.

Government of India,
Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions,
Department of Personnel and Training,
Staff Selection Commission,
Block No. 12, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110003.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

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Sub: - Adoption of Guidelines framed by Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment in OM dated 01.08.2025 -reg.

It is informed that with regard to PwBD candidates, at present the Commission is following its Scribe Procedure outlined in earlier notice dated 25.10.2024. The eligible PwBD candidates were expected to follow these guidelines in order to avail the facility of engaging a scribe.

2. The DEPwD has recently issued Comprehensive Guidelines vide their OM dated 01.08.2025 relating to engagement of scribes, a copy of which is annexed herewith.

3. In line with the above guidelines, the Commission has decided to implement the provisions contained therein and to do away with the provision of 'OWN SCRIBE'. It is clarified that for PwBD candidates who are eligible for availing of the services of a scribe for SSC exams, such scribe shall be provided only by the Commission.

4. It is also informed that this will be applicable to all the examinations of the Commission being held after the date of issue of this Notice. This is also applicable to the examinations that are to be held henceforth, for which where the submission of application forms has been concluded.

Date 03.09.2025

Under Secretary
SSC (HQ)

F. No. P-13013/75/2023-Policy-DD-III
Government of India
Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment
Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)
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Pt. Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan,
C.G.O. Complex, New Delhi -110003
Date: 01 August, 2025

Office Memorandum

Subject: Revised Comprehensive Guidelines for conducting competitive written public examinations (linked to employment or admission to professional or technical courses) for Persons with Disabilities under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, incorporating the Hon'ble Supreme Court Directives in the matter

Introduction:

These revised Comprehensive Guidelines on the subject are being issued in supersession of all existing instructions on the subject i.e DEPwD's OM No. 29-6/2019-DD-III dated 10.08.2022 and DEPwD's OM No. 34-02/2015-DD-III dated 29.08.2018 with a corrigendum issued in the matter vide OM No. 34-02/2015-DD-III dated 08.02.2019 and, in so far as it is concerned with the competitive written public examinations (linked to employment or admission to professional or technical courses), to bring them in line with the provisions of the RPwD Act, 2016; the Public Examination (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024; rules made under these legislations, and the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in their Orders dated 11.02.2021, 23.11.2021 and 03.02.2025 in Vikas Kumar Vs. UPSC, Avni Prakash Vs. National Testing Agency and Gulshan Kumar Vs IBPS and Ors. respectively.

Applicability of the Guidelines:

2. These guidelines will apply **only to the competitive exams leading to jobs and admission to professional courses and NOT to the regular school (board)/ college/ university academic exams** for which the earlier guidelines i.e. DEPwD's OM No. 29-6/2019-DD-III dated 10.08.2022 and DEPwD's OM No. 34-02/2015-DD-III dated 29.08.2018 with a corrigendum issued in the matter vide OM No. 34-02/2015-DD-III dated 08.02.2019 and, will continue to be valid till further orders.

3. These Guidelines apply to all individuals defined as Persons with Disabilities under Section 2(s) of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016. However, the facility of assistance (i.e. technological aid like software enabled laptop/ desktop, reader, lab assistant or scribe, as prescribed in the subsequent paragraphs) during written exam may be provided to all such candidates who, due to their disability,

face functional limitations in writing an examination, irrespective of the nature or extent of their disability. This includes, but is not limited to, individuals with physical limitations in writing, visual impairments preventing reading or writing, intellectual disabilities affecting comprehension or expression, or any other disability that impedes their ability to participate effectively in the examination process, as certified by a competent authority, as specified in the following guidelines.

4. Rule 5 of Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Rules, 2024 provides that the National Recruitment Agency, on behalf of the Central Government, shall in consultation with the stakeholders, prepare norms, standards and guidelines for **the computer-based test mode** of examination, which shall be notified by the Central Government that will inter alia include guidelines for providing scribes.

[*Note: Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Rules, 2024 mentions that the computer-based test includes activities, such as registration of candidates, allocation of centres, issue of admit cards, opening and distribution of question papers at public examination centres, evaluation, and final recommendations. National Testing Agency specifies that a CBT requires candidates to sit in front of a computer terminal (node) allocated to them against their Roll number and Admit card*.]

<u>Facilities to be provided for Persons with Disabilities in written examinations</u>:

5. Choice of Mode of Examination, aids and assistive devices and use of technology:

A. Independent Mode of Writing the Examination:

i. The Examining Bodies shall encourage candidates to take the examination **independently,** with the assistance of technology such as software-enabled laptops, desktops, Braille/ large print, or by recording their answers. The examining bodies, to that extent, shall make corresponding technological paraphernalia (i.e., software-enabled laptops/desktops, Braille/ large print, or recording devices) available in sufficient numbers with comprehensive coverage for Indian Languages and English.

ii. Where job and academic requirements necessitate that employees or students work independently with computers, the examining bodies will offer the option to PwD candidates to take the exam on a laptop or desktop, enabling them to write the exam **independently without the assistance** of a scribe. Examining Bodies are expected, in general, to decrease the need for scribes gradually and enable candidates to participate in the examination, demonstrating and realizing their full potential and capacity, with reasonable accommodations on a case-by-case basis. Assistance has been prescribed in the paragraph 5.B for different types of public exams, depending on the nature of academic/ job requirements, and also

taking into account the broader and long-term interests of Persons with Disabilities, as discussed in the subsequent paragraphs.

[*Note: Technology interventions like JAWS (Job Access with Speech)/ NVDA(Non visual Desktop Access), ORCA, large prints, tactile graphics, magnification software etc for blind/ low vision candidates; voice recognition software/ head-mouse etc for locomotor disabilities; text-to-speech or vice versa software for persons having difficulty in reading like dyslexia etc., LaTeX+TeX / Math ML content add-on/software may be explored as reasonable accommodation; The software mentioned herein are illustrative and not exhaustive*].

iii. Significant inputs have been received from responsible bodies like UPSC, DoPT, NRA, etc., expressing concern over the credibility and transparency of the exams being undertaken by the PwDs by using a scribe, in general. In particular, the provision of 'Own Scribe' has been identified as a significant vulnerability in maintaining the integrity and fairness of the examination process. Instances of malpractice, including collusion between candidates and their privately arranged scribes, have been observed by various Examining Bodies, where scribes wrote answers independently without adequate dictation, thereby undermining the examination's credibility.

Such actions not only violate the principles of a level playing field but also put at a disadvantage the candidates who take the exams on their own by using technology or rely on the examining bodies' vetted scribes. Furthermore, given the evolving specialized requirements in technical/ professional domain-specific fields, both in academia and in jobs, independent functioning is essential after the placement of the selected candidate into a specific job or an advanced academic course.

Therefore, in all such cases, where independent work capability is a critical job/ academic requirement, the examination's confidentiality, integrity, and equity in terms of Public Examination (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024 and rules made thereunder needs to be upheld while making the performance in the exams relatable to the output in the jobs/ rigorous professional courses. Hence, emphasis will be placed on having candidates write the exams independently.

However, in cases such as the non-availability of technological paraphernalia, i.e., software-enabled laptops/desktops, Braille/ large print, or recording devices for the answers, or where the candidate wishes to use a Scribe, the use of scribes provided by the Examining Bodies, who are rigorously identified and supervised, may be resorted to. Various EBs are provided a non-negotiable time limit of 2 years (effective from the date of issue of these Guidelines) for consolidating (if not already existing) a comprehensive pool of scribes. This measure will ensure uniformity and prevent exploitation of the provision. The "own scribe" provision may be allowed, as a last resort, until the "pool of scribes" is ready for applicants who do not opt for the use of technology, or until the lapse of two years, as specified above, whichever is earlier.

B. Provisions in r/o Scribes/ Reader/ Lab Assistant:

This is to reiterate the overarching emphasis on encouraging candidates to write the exam independently. The scribe, if at all permitted, because of the refusal by the candidate to use technology, has to be provided by the EBs. An own scribe may be allowed if, and only if, the EB is unable to provide a scribe. EBs are, however, expected to form a comprehensive panel of scribes within a maximum of 02 years of the issue of these Guidelines.

The examining bodies (EBs) can work out the provision of providing scribes and eliminating the "candidate's Own scribe" option even before two years of this order, subject to the condition that they offer proper scribes to their candidates who opt for scribes rather than using technology. Note that this decision must be made at the relevant EB level and does not need to be referred to DEPwD.

Accordingly, the provision of scribes and their qualification is prescribed hereunder in r/o various competitive exams, with an overarching aim at augmenting the larger and lasting interests of the Persons with Disabilities, including their contribution to the nation's growth in an inclusive mode.

i. Qualification of the Scribe/Reader/Lab Assistant for Competitive (Professional/ Job-linked) Public Examinations:

Sl No.	Nature of Examination	Qualification of Scribe
1	Competitive Public Entrance Examinations for admission into Graduation/Post Graduation/higher professional/technical courses like IIT-JEE, NEET, CAT, CLAT, UGC-NET, GATE, CUET, etc, and equivalent.	The candidates are encouraged to write the exam on their own using the software-enabled laptop/ desktop/ Braille/ large print or recording device for the answers. In cases where the candidate opts for a scribe rather than using technology, EBs will provide scribes rigorously identified from their pool. The EBs are granted a non-negotiable time limit of 2 years, effective from the date of issuance of these Guidelines, for consolidating (if not existing already) a comprehensive pool of scribes, compatible with Indian languages and English. In cases where the candidate opts for a scribe rather than the use of technology, the qualification of the scribe must be a minimum of "two academic years below" and a maximum of "three academic years below"

		the minimum qualification for appearing in that examination. (*For example, for appearing in Joint Entrance Examinations (Main), if the minimum eligibility is 12th pass or equivalent, the qualification of the scribe may be 10th standard ongoing/below, but not below 9th standard ongoing. Likewise, if the minimum qualification to appear for NET/GATE is post-graduation/equivalent, the scribe may be at most in the final year of Graduation or below (assuming PG is 02 year course), but not below the second-to-last year of graduation*. *The pass-out graduates may also be eligible in this case as long as they are not enrolled in or started the first year of PG*.)
2	Competitive Public Examinations for recruitment in central government establishments like UPSC-Civil Services Exam, SSC exams, NDA etc., and equivalent	The candidates are encouraged to take the exam independently using a software-enabled laptop/ desktop/ Braille device/ large print device, or recording device to record their answers. In cases where the candidate opts for a scribe rather than using technology, EBs will provide scribes rigorously identified from their pool. The EBs are granted a non-negotiable time limit of 2 years, effective from the date of issuance of these Guidelines, for consolidating (if not existing already) a comprehensive pool of scribes, compatible with Indian languages and English. In cases where the candidate opts for a scribe rather than the use of technology, the qualification of the scribe must be a minimum of “two academic years below” and a maximum of “three academic years below” the minimum qualification for appearing in that examination. *(For example, if the minimum qualification for appearing in the Staff Selection Commission Combined Graduate Level Examination is a Graduate, the scribe's qualification may be in the first academic year of graduation (for a 3 year course), but not below the 12th standard running).*

ii. The facility of Scribe/ Reader/ Lab Assistant must be allowed to any person in the absence of availability of required technology or inability of the candidate (as elaborated in Para-5 A above) to use them.

iii. In case of persons with disabilities in the category of blindness, locomotor disability (Both Arms **only**) and cerebral palsy, the facility of scribe/reader/ lab assistant may be given, if so desired by the person, upon production of valid disability certificate/ UDID card **without requiring of production of any medical certificate as per the proforma at APPENDIX-I.**

iv. In the case of all other specified disabilities i.e., except blindness, locomotor disability (both arm affected-BA **only**), and cerebral palsy, the facility of scribe/reader/lab assistant must be allowed on production of a certificate to the effect that the person concerned has a functional limitation to write, caused by the specified disability and, therefore, a scribe is essential to write the examination on his/her behalf. The certificate is to be issued, **after due medical examination as per Para-3 of these Guidelines**, by the Chief Medical Officer/Civil Surgeon/ Medical Superintendent of a Government healthcare institution as per the proforma at **Appendix-I.**

[Note: *The medical authority for certification as mentioned in point(iii) above should be a multi-member authority comprising the following:-*

(1) *Chief Medical Officer/ Civil Surgeon/ Chief District Medical Officer..... Chairperson*
(2) *Orthopaedic/PMR specialist .....Member*
(3) *Any other expert, based on the condition of the candidate, as may be nominated by the Chairperson..... Member*]

v. The examination body shall identify and make a panel of suitable scribes, according to the examinations.

vi. In limited cases, where the candidate is allowed to bring their own scribe, he/she should submit details of their own scribe as per the proforma at **Appendix-II**.

vii. While bringing own scribe, the details of the scribe is to be provided to the EB at the time of application. The application format has to provide for such a declaration. Else, EB has to provide a dedicated email-id or provide a dedicated link on the designated application portal to provide such information within 15 days of closure of the application subject to changes in scribe to be allowed at short notice (say, a week) in case of exigency.

viii. In case of an own scribe, any objections to be raised by the examination body as regards eligibility of the scribe will have to be raised 30 days before the date of the exam so that the candidate can arrange a different scribe.

ix. If a student/candidate brings a different scribe other than the one previously informed on the day of examination, including the short notice changes referred to above, the Examination Body will provide Scribe from its own pool subject to availability. In case the Examining Body is unable to provide a scribe, they will allow the scribe arranged by the candidate, after taking necessary declarations/documents from the student/candidate, subject to fulfilling the qualifications as mentioned in these guidelines for that particular examination.

x. When the Examining Bodies (EB) are arranging the scribe, it may be ensured, as far as possible, that the scribe is from the same stream/ discipline as the subject of the examination. For. e.g., while assigning a scribe to a student taking a science or technical examination, it may be ensured that the scribe is familiar with the specialised terms and symbols of mathematics, sciences and technical subjects. However, cross-stream scribes may be allowed for general subjects like Language, Humanities or Social Sciences or general open public examinations.

xi. Scribes must be impartial individuals with no conflict of interest that could compromise the impartiality of the examination.

xii. Candidates availing assistance of scribe will have to communicate with the scribe only in the language, as medium of writing the examination, as opted by them in the application (own scribe proforma/online application). Accordingly, invigilators having sufficient understanding of that language to be engaged for effective supervision during the Exam.

xiii. The scribe arranged (own/ provided by examining body) should not himself/herself be the candidate for the exam for which the candidate is appearing.

xiv. “Own Scribe” shall not act as scribe for more than one candidate in a single examination.

xv. In cases where EBs providing scribes, candidates will be allowed to meet the scribe for a 20-minute interaction session one hour before the start of the examination at the assigned venue.

xvi. In cases where candidates request a change of scribe on valid grounds, such as language barriers, they can submit a request to the examination body to change the scribe. Only one such request will be considered by the Examination Body (EB), and the acceptance of the request is subject to the

availability of another scribe on the date of examination or other related factors.

xvii. EB may dedicate specific venues for PwD candidates and their scribes (with an additional number of scribes available for any exigency during exam hours), where the EB can invest more in terms of CCTV, trained invigilators, etc.

xviii. The candidates should also be allowed to take more than one scribe/ reader to write different papers. However, there can be only one scribe per subject.

xix. The examination body shall not change the process of indicating scribe details or any other accessibility needs / reasonable accommodations from the date of initial advertisement till the conclusion of the exam in question.

Compensatory time:

6. Availability of Compensatory time is as follows:

i. The ”compensatory time” should be allowed for not less than 20 minutes per hour of examination for candidates with disabilities, having functional limitations in writing as specified in these guidelines and assessed by the prescribed medical authority, whether they are using the services of a scribe/reader/lab assistant or not.

ii. In case the duration of the examination is less than one hour, then the duration of compensatory time should be allowed on a pro-rata basis in a fraction of an hour.

Accessible Examination Centres:

7. The examination centres should ensure barrier-free entry and navigation, with ramps, lifts, wide corridors and doors, signage and directions, audio announcements for visually impaired candidates, accessible seating arrangements, preferably on the ground floor, etc. The staff on examination duty should be briefed/trained on disability etiquette and how to handle assistive technology. Medical personnel should be available in the Centre in case of emergencies.

8. A separate examination room and a quieter venue, wherever possible, may be arranged for SLD/ neurodiverse/ candidates with chronic health conditions.

Miscellaneous:

9. Some more accommodations to be observed by the examining bodies are given below:

a. In case any candidate reporting disability caused by an incident that happened after filling out the application form, they may be allowed for reasonable accommodations as specified under these guidelines after production of a valid certificate of disability and medical certificate as per Appendix I.

b. The certificate of disability issued under the now-repealed Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 (PWD Act), the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016, and corresponding rules should be accepted nationwide.

c. The Bodies conducting the examinations, when notifying the commencement of such examinations, shall declare a dedicated complaint resolution system to address grievances raised by candidates with disabilities regarding issues related to the examination.

d. The Examining Bodies shall establish suitable incentive programs for their pool of scribes to ensure availability and provide necessary training to scribes empaneled in this pool.

e. EBs are required to introduce a feedback system by the examinee, to ensure quality of scribes in the pool.

f. The examination bodies shall conduct periodic sensitization of all invigilators, officials handling the examination centers, persons involved in providing resolution to candidate queries as well as complaint redressal officials involved. Such sensitization shall be designed keeping all disabilities in mind and shall be held at least once every year.

g. The authorities/ officials in charge of decision making process, who fail to follow these Guidelines and formulate Guidelines which exclude PwDs are liable for penal action against them by appropriate authority.

h. All Examination Body/Recruiting Bodies shall ensure the protection of candidates' personal, medical, and disability-related data, collected solely for examination purposes and accommodations. Data should be securely stored, encrypted, and accessed only by authorized personnel, in compliance with the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, and RPwD Act, 2016.

10. The Authority conducting the examination will have the power to take necessary action/ impose penalty, as deemed fit, in case of observance of any malpractice by the candidate/ scribe.

11. The Bodies conducting the examinations are to ensure the implementation of these guidelines while conducting written examinations involving persons with

disabilities. All concerned authorities are requested to ensure strict adherence to these guidelines through periodic surveys/verification. To ensure its uniform implementation, the authorities are to inspect their existing guidelines and re-notify them in consonance with these Guidelines within a period of 03 months from the date of issuance of these Guidelines.

12. These Guidelines take effect with the date of its issue and are issued with the approval of Hon'ble Minister, Social Justice & Empowerment.

BDjee
01 Aug 2025

(Debala Bhattacharjee)
Under Secretary to the Government of India
(email: debala.joarder@gov.in)

To

1. The Secretary, all Ministries/Department as per standard list
2. The Chairperson, UPSC, Shahjahan Road, New Delhi.
3. The Chairperson, SSC, Block No.12, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003.
4. The Chairperson, University Grants Commission Chairperson, Bahadurshah Zafar Marg, New Delhi-110002
5. The Chairperson, Railway Board, M/o Railways
6. The Chairperson, National Testing Agency, First Floor, NSIC-MDBP Building, Okhla Industrial Estate, New Delhi, Delhi 110020
7. All National Institutes and RCI under the administrative control of Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of SJ&E, New Delhi

Copy for information to:

a. O/o the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, Dwarka, New Delhi
b. The Director, IT Cell, DEPwD with a request to arrange uploading the Guidelines (English and Hindi) to DEPwD website at the link https://depwd.gov.in/guidelines-2/

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Appendix-I

Certificate for recommendation of scribe/reader/lab assistant and/or Compensatory Time for persons with disabilities as defined under Section 2(s) of the RPwD Act 2016 and have limitation in writing as specified in the Guidelines.

This is to certify that, we have examined Mr./ Ms./ Mrs. ……. (name of the candidate), S/o /D/o ……, a resident of……(Vill/PO/PS/District/State), aged……..yrs, a person with…….(nature of disability/condition),and to state that he/ she has limitation which hampers his/ her writing capability owing to his/her above disability/condition. He/ she requires support of scribe/ reader/lab assistant/and or Compensatory Time as specified in the Guidelines, for writing the examination.

2. The above candidate uses aids and assistive device such as prosthetics & orthotics, hearing aid (name to be specified)/ other (to be specified), which is/are essential for the candidate to appear at the examination with the assistance of scribe.

3. This certificate is issued only for the purpose of appearing in written examinations conducted by Examining Bodies and is valid up to___(it is valid for maximum period of one year or less as may be certified by the medical authority)

Signature of medical authority

Name of Government Hospital/ Health Care Centre with Seal
Place
Date

Appendix-II

Letter of Undertaking by the persons with disabilities as defined under section 2(s) of RPwD Act 2016 using the services of scribe/reader/lab assistant during written examinations conducted by various authorities as specified in the Guidelines.

I_____, a candidate with_____ (nature of disability/condition) appearing for the_____ (name of the examination) bearing Roll No._____at _____(name of the centre) in the District_____,_____(name of the State).My educational qualification is _____.

2. I do hereby state that_____(name of the scribe) will provide the service of scribe/reader/lab assistant for the undersigned for taking the aforementioned examination. I further declare that there is no conflict of interest of any kind that may affect the impartiality of the examination.

3. I do hereby undertake that his qualification is _____. In case, subsequently, it is found that his qualification is not as declared by the undersigned and is beyond the specified qualification for the examination as mentioned in the extant Guidelines, I shall forfeit my right to the post/position/academic seat I am competing for and claims relating thereto.

(Signature of the candidate)

(counter-signature by the parent/ guardian, if the candidate is minor)

Place:
Date: