



GUIDELINES
POST MATRIC SCHOLARSHIPS
TO THE STUDENTS BELONGING TO
SCHEDULED CASTES
FOR STUDIES IN INDIA
(January, 2021- March, 2026)

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE &
EMPOWERMENT
Department of Social Justice & Empowerment
(January, 2021)

**SCHEME OF POST MATRIC SCHOLARSHIPS
TO THE STUDENTS BELONGING TO SCHEDULED CASTES FOR
STUDIES IN INDIA PMS-SC
(with effect from January, 2021)**

1. Objective

1.1 The objective of the scheme is to appreciably increase the gross enrolment ratio in higher education of SC students 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. **(Applicable at day scholar rate only Rs 550 per month)** (iv) M.Phil, Ph.D and Post-Doctoral Programmes (D.Lit., D.Sc. etc.), Group I, Group II and Group III courses. (vi) 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 for release of scholarship under the scheme as per the entitlements for that particular year.

4. Eligibility of Educational Institutions

4.1 Only such higher educational Institutions which maintain the laid down academic standards shall be covered under the scheme. All such participating institutions shall get NAAC/NBA accreditation before 2024 for continuation in the scheme from 2025-26 onwards. In case of schools and diploma institutions, only those which are recognized by the competent authority shall be considered under the scheme.

4.2 Accordingly, scholarships will be given for the study of all recognized post-matriculation or post-secondary courses pursued in recognized Institutions/ Universities/ Colleges falling in any of the following 9 categories of institutes and the PMS-SC scholarships can be reimbursed/availed for intermediate, Diploma, Vocational Training Certificate, Graduate, Post Graduate courses etc. :

- i. Institutions of National Importance;

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- 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. Private Universities recognized by State/Centre with 'A' level or equivalent accreditation by NAAC, NBA;
 - 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 Institute 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 admissions shall be restricted to those numbers and courses.

4.3 The following conditions regarding details of courses offered, performance of the institute, Aadhaar based attendance system is also required to be adhered by the Institutions/Universities/Colleges in order to be eligible under the scheme:

- i. The Institutions/Colleges at the time of submitting scholarship applications of students will also submit/ upload details of their registration, affiliation and accreditation, courses being offered and number of seats approved for each course on the portal created for this purpose.
- ii. To be eligible for scholarships for their students in any academic year, the institutions should have a minimum of 50% renewal in respect of students availing post-matric scholarship for the previous academic year. However, where the institution is able to give good and sufficient reasons for not achieving minimum of 50% renewal, the above mentioned limit will not apply. Good and sufficient reasons imply natural calamities like flood/ drought/ unforeseen circumstances/ law and order problem etc.
- iii. The scholarship benefits shall be linked with Aadhar based attendance system. Therefore, the college/Institution will maintain an Aadhar based attendance system on a daily basis and will submit attendance details on the portal.

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Institutes will submit half-yearly self-audited reports to the State Governments in a prescribed format.

5. Conditions of Eligibility of Students

- 5.1 The scholarships are open to Nationals of India.
- 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 The ceiling on age limit for admission as regular student in different classes should be decided by concerned Institutions.
- 5.4 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.
- 5.5 Students who pursue their studies through correspondence courses are also eligible. The term correspondence includes distant and continuing education for courses in Central/ State Universities only. Non-refundable fees shall be paid and no maintenance allowance will be paid.
- 5.6 All children of the same parents/guardians will be entitled to receive benefits of the scheme.
- 5.7 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 adhoc 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.
- 5.8 Scholarship holders who are receiving coaching in any of the pre-examination training centers with financial assistance from the Central Government/ State Government will not be eligible for stipend under the coaching scheme for the duration of the coaching programme.

Coverage of Students

Although many SC students have availed benefits under this scheme and have occupied high positions in the society, still the Gross Enrolment Ratio 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 Higher 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 The State Governments shall ensure that the poorest students belonging to the SC households shall get top priority for coverage under the scheme. This would include (i) students from SC households with three or more deprivations as per SECC-2011, (ii) the students from the 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 schools. In this regard, States/UTs will launch special campaign 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. Such students may be encouraged to enrol and avail scholarships, in a campaign mode. 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 drives, 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 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.

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 in to the student database for renewals and fresh admissions can be done in a stipulated timeframe.

7. Means Test

7.1 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). 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.

8. Components of the Scholarship

8.1 The component of scholarship includes the following for 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, payable half-yearly
- ii. Academic allowance payable half-yearly

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

#The Divyang students, 10% extra.

8.2. 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.

9. Selection of Candidates

- 9.1. All the eligible Scheduled Caste candidates will be given scholarships subject to the application of Means Test prescribed in this Scheme.
- 9.2. The students from the poorest households (See Para 6) will be proactively followed for admission in the suitable courses.
- 9.2. Candidates belonging to one State but studying in other State will be awarded scholarships by the State to which they belong. Students domiciled in a State/UT but holding SC Certificate in other State/UT can avail scholarship from the State/UT of domicile.

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, with a 5% annual increase each year. 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, whichever is lesser, will be considered for each State/UT. For subsequent years i.e. 2021-22 & onwards, the demand of all States put together will be limited by a 5% annual increase over the average demand for the scheme for the three year period 2017-18 to 2019-20. The PAC will ensure that the overall increase will not exceed 105% of previous year demand. 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. 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, including the tuition fees and academic allowance will be paid into the account of the students ONLY through DBT. Starting from 2021-22, the Central share in the scheme would be released on DBT mode directly into the bank accounts of the students, after ensuring that the concerned State Government has released their share.

11.2 The scholarship amount shall be disbursed in two half-yearly installments - by 15th August and 26th January each year. There shall be no delays in payment of the scholarships. For this purpose the State shall ensure that the two installments are disbursed to the students by 15th July and 31st December respectively so that the Central share can also be released in time.

11.3 The State Government/ UT Government will release 40% (in two installments of 20% each) of the scholarship (10% in the case of North Eastern States) on the online portal created for this purpose. Based on this, the central share of 60% (in two installments of 30% each) (90% in the case of North Eastern States) will be released.

11.4 Payment of scholarship/ maintenance and any other admissible allowance should be made to beneficiaries directly into their accounts, preferably through Aadhaar enabled payment system from 2021-22.

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 course subject to good conduct and attendance of 75% in every academic year. The attendance will be verified through Aadhar 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.

3. 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 disbursement of scholarships, where not already done. The scholarship portal should mandatorily have the following features:

- a) At the time of admission, 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.
- b) The States shall undertake fool-proof verification of the eligibility, caste status, Aadhaar identification and bank account details on the online portal. There shall be no upload of any documents or any certificates into the system. All data should be auto-verified by linking databases such as (i) school boards' results, including the CBSE/ICSE along with the certificates maintained by them; (ii) database of income certificates and caste certificates issued by State/District Administration and (iii) databases maintained by the Universities and Colleges, using Aadhar number as the link.
- c) All verification process of the students should be done using the above authenticated databases automatically using the digital process. There should be no system of verification by the institutions or even the district level officers. (They can come in only if any case of failure of machine-based authentication.)
- d) The Aadhaar based biometric attendance shall be recorded by each institution.
- e) There shall be no system of calling for the bank account details of the students and authenticating it. All payments must go through ABPS after checking the Aadhaar number with NPCI mapper.

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- f) The renewals should be automatic based on passing the previous year examination and having the required attendance. There should not be any requirement for the student to apply for renewals.
 - g) A performance module to monitor the progress of student as well as performance of the institution should be suitably designed and incorporated.
 - h) Apart from this, they shall maintain a complete database of the beneficiaries under various other scholarship schemes to ensure de-duplication of the beneficiaries.

14. Annual Action Plan

14.1 Every participating State/UT, on or before 28th February of the preceding year, will prepare a State level Plan for PMS scheme. Any other initiatives of the State Govt. on similar lines may be mentioned separately in the Action Plan. The 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 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, 2020, 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 and (iii) academic outcomes of the scholarship-holders (iv) Implementation of Aadhar based attendance, (v) Digitisation 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 rewarded accordingly. The details in this regard will be prepared after consultations, and will be shared through instructions in due course.

5. Announcement of the Scheme by States/UTs

5.1 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 mode of media. All requests for application forms and other particulars should be addressed to the Government of State/Union Territory Administration to which the scholars actually belong. 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. Procedure for Applying

17.1 An application for scholarship will be made online on scholarship portal giving the details only of the Aadhaar number and the details of the course admitted. The verification of the income, caste and merit details should be auto-checked from the databases which are linked online for instant verification. The process should be entirely paperless.

17.2. Until the above system is brought into effect, the documents may be scanned and uploaded which include: passport size photograph, digital signature, copy of each of certificates, diploma, degree etc. in respect of all examinations passed, Caste certificate duly signed by the authorized Officer, Income certificate issued by the competent authority as prescribed by the State Govt.

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 Government 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.

3.4. 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 system in the Annual Action Plans. This would be considered by the PAC by 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 a online grievance redressal mechanism linking all the authorities responsible for implementation on the scholarship portal.

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

20.3. Every institution shall have a Grievance Redressal Officer (GROs) 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 shall automatically escalated to the district and later to the State level for resolution.
