# Criteria 7.2   Best Practices

### 1.  Digital Resilience and Stakeholder Connect through Open Access

**Objectives:** Realising and appreciating the digital shift in the academic aspects for all our stakeholders, the Institute has taken adequate steps to fully embrace the change.

The initiatives taken aim to achieve the following outcomes**:**

1. To nurture the spirit of growth and **facilitate digital evolution** amongst the staff members by providing adequate resources and training.
2. To encourage the faculty **to take responsibility towards responding to the needs of various stakeholders.**
3. To develop and maintain a culture of **open access and transparency** to maintain the institutional standards of excellence.
4. To create a sustainable approach towards **building digital resilience**.

**Context -** In this age of information technology, organisations and institutions across the world face a daunting task to either transform their traditional approach to work or perish. Educational Institutes in particular have been exposed to quickly adapt to changing times as they bear the responsibility to create a future generation which is capable and equipped to make their presence worthy enough in these uncertain times. Keeping this in mind, it becomes essential to continuously invest in upskilling and providing the best of opportunities to faculty members, who in turn, can reshape and reinvent themselves and the learning environments successfully in the face of upcoming challenges. Moreover, the advent of Covid-19 pandemic has bought issues as lack of digital infrastructure, inadequate training to optimally utilise the existing tools and centrality of need for effective communication to the fore front. Thus every possible effort is being made to overcome the said challenges.

**Practice:**

Institute has continuously made efforts to encourage and equip faculty members with the best of resources which can increase their competence and cater to the ever changing dynamics of teaching learning process.

For this, following activities were conducted:

1. Flexible teaching and learning opportunities were provided with institution going online for all student related activities.
2. Institute responded with agility by creating accommodative rules and regulations. Example- Mandatory attendance criterion was relaxed for Covid positive students.
3. Beginning from the top most level, Institute empathetically responded to the needs of all its stakeholders. Any student facing fee payment issues was dealt with a lighter hand.
4. To garner maximum efficiency and flexibility, blended mode of learning was adopted as per the SOPs and Government protocols.
5. In order to enhance digital resilience for a sustainable future, a GGSIPU sponsored National Conference on "Digital Entrepreneurship" was organised on 29-30th January 2021.

6. Online software trainings were provided to equip faculty with the right set of tools to enhance online teaching competence.
7. As a matter of policy, Institute opted for online internal assessments and the entire curriculum was shifted to online mode to ensure seamless learning experience.
8. External examinations were conducted using proctored tools of assessment.
9. To cater to the emotional needs of students, proper counselling facilities were provided at Institute level.
10. Student welfare committee conducted several mentorship sessions with students to motivate and offer utmost support regarding their impeding issues at all times.
11. To maintain the institutional standards of excellence, quality of teaching learning process was carefully preserved by ensuring conduct of regular classes, constant monitoring and evaluation through assignments, presentations for students and tutorials by faculty members.
12. To promote **open access and transparency**, effective feedback system is in place to plug the loopholes well in time. Also, all the stakeholders, be it students, teachers, parents, and guardians are free to approach the Director as well as the Management. This has helped the Institute maintain total transparency at all levels. During Covid, the Director and Faculty were accessible online to meet the needs of all concerned, be it students or parents.
13. Teachers made all efforts were to sustain students' interest and attention in the online mode by using relevant videos, news sites, and online portals to better achieve the learning outcomes.

These activities helped enhance overall knowledge of the students, develop right perspective and ethos to be successful at whatever they do. Apart from these regular training, FDPs, motivational lectures on topics related to research, management, intercommunication skills, values and ethics were organised.

**Evidence of Success -**The success of all the initiatives taken is evident from the fact that many students of the Institute are awarded gold medals at the university level. The faculty reschedules the classes in an event of emergency or leave, thus a continuity in classes is ensured and it shows in the students of MSI making it to merit lists across Departments. Students of this Institute are well qualified, have become entrepreneurs and have been successful in their endeavours. Most of them are placed with reputed organisations. Additionally, even in the most challenging times, the classes went uninterrupted and the learning process went on smoothly.

As a result of efforts made to ensure optimum stakeholder connect, the regular skill development initiatives helped the faculty to develop onto their professional goals as well. A majority of faculty in the Institute hold a PhD Degree certifying their academic capabilities. Additionally, faculty members have swiftly shifted to online mode of teaching without affecting the productivity. They are kept motivated through various incentives and they pass on similar levels of enthusiasm and encouragement to the students. This has created a congenial environment to learn and grow and reach new heights on academic and professional fronts together.

**Problems Encountered–** Though students effectively adopted to the new ways of learning but digital constraints is still an issue. Not every student had access to the required tools of modern ways of learning and thus providing access is an issue. To ensure adequate engagement of students using online tools, teachers have to be more creative and informative at the same time. Even then, network problems and connectivity issues sometimes proved to be a hurdle in smooth conduct of online classes. Likewise, lesser interaction and lack of emotional rapport in online platforms in comparison to offline mode lessened teaching effectiveness to some extent. Despite being highly qualified, faculty members are not recognized as eligible guides for PhD students in the university as University norms are a major deterrent. Further, the faculty are unable to get research grants and sponsorships from the government agencies for research projects due to norms which are a hurdle in their professional development and competency enhancement.

## 2. Title- Building a Legacy of Academic Excellence and Producing Gold Medallists

**Objective**: The Institute is committed to create an empowering environment that instils skills and competencies to attain and maintain academic excellence. The students are provided exposure and quality teaching learning experience to attain their maximum potential that results in MSI students creating a legacy by getting Gold Medals year after year. MSI aims to achieve the following objectives through our practices:

1. To attain and maintain academic excellence.
2. To ensure an enriching teaching learning experience for students through nurturing excellence by providing opportunities to attain their potential to the optimum.
3. To build a legacy of producing Gold Medallists.

**Context** - We live in a society that is driven by excellence. There is a need to identify and nurture outstanding students and thereby providing them enriching opportunities outside of the constraints of textbooks and prescribed curricula to attain their potential. This provides students a chance to realise their innate capabilities, invoke interest in desired area of knowledge, pursuing it with passion and attain extraordinary results. The prime requisite for this is to have a clear institutional mission, provide maximum support, and create an academic environment that supports individual excellence. The Institutes need to provide opportunities to students with outstanding academic abilities to optimally utilise the existing tools, extend support whenever needed and provide them a platform where they can further strengthen their skills, abilities and talents; and the outcome is seen in terms of remarkable academic success.

**Practice**:

Maharaja Surajmal Institute is amongst one of the most admired colleges across Delhi NCR for achieving ever higher levels of excellence in academics. Students at MSI, are provided exposure to multiple activities and opportunities for all round development. They are consistently in the University top rankers list and are felicitated on year to year basis.

With these key objectives in mind strategically planned, result oriented teaching learning activities are conducted throughout the year namely:

1. The learning outcomes are the focus of all teaching learning endeavours that are designed to promote academic excellence through critical thinking, capacity building, skill enhancing activities.
2. For ensuring academic enrichment and capacity building of students, Institute makes special efforts to assist students in their learning cycles by customising the learning outcomes. For high achieving students, the Institute focuses on imparting the knowledge deemed 'Must know, Should know and Could know.'
3. Institute offers infrastructural facilities like smart classrooms, fully equipped library, well equipped laboratories and computer labs, wi-fi enabled campus.

4. The Institute boasts of state of the art, cutting edge technology in all its programmes. Fully equipped computer labs, smartboard enabled classroom teaching, e-modules of subjects, installation of softwares in library and subscriptions to eLibrary resources are some of the highlights meant to keep the students at par with the best in the class.

5. Regular seminars and webinars are organised for intellectual evolution of the students on contemporary topics to involve students in research and creative activities, provide them a platform for polishing their skills and confidence.

6. The students are given opportunities to pursue internships in order to reduce curriculum-industry gaps.

7. Student are encouraged to participate in various societies working at Institute level to harness their hidden potential and promote holistic development.

8. Along with this, the Institute's faculty are highly qualified, demonstrate excellence in teaching and mentoring students, keep themselves abreast of latest innovative practices through FDPs and workshops and exhibit academic leadership.

9. The faculty go well prepared to classes, prepare Lesson Plans in advance, in case of leaves, the faculty ensure regularity of classes by taking extra classes, regular attendance of students is ensured, and the quality of the Courses taught is ensured by Class Coordinators by regularly maintaining Semester Quality Reports (SQRs) in every Semester.

10. Continuous assessment mechanism has helped students become competitive and sharp at the same time.

11. The extraordinary efforts of teachers and students is translating into extraordinary results. The Institute is writing History and creating a legacy of producing Gold Medallists in the University across courses.

**Evidence of Success –** Maharaja Surajmal Institute helps students reinvent themselves by grooming them into confident, able, skilled and motivated adults focussed towards a bright future**.** This is evident from their efforts being translated into extraordinary results. To the extent that MSI has created a legacy of producing Gold Medallists across courses over the years. The Institute has become a quintessence for the other Institutes to follow. The students of MSI bag Gold Medals year after year. Not only that, the Institute has upheld academic excellence by producing many students apart from Gold Medallists as Exemplary performers. Among the gold medallist we have several students namely Bhavya Jain (B.com(H)), Mani Chitkara (B.Ed), Muskan Saluja (BCA), Dhruvi Goyal (BCA), Joshita Dua (BBA(B&I)). List of exemplary performers also includes number of students namely Tushar Saneja (BBA (G)), Khushboo Kalra (BBA (B&I), Ritika Mehra and Karan Singh (BCA).Hence, all this testifies the significance of efforts made at MSI to ensure academic excellence and overall growth of its students.

**Problems Encountered–**

Excellence is not a one-time activity. It is a continuous pursuit to achieve the best that we can within available resources. MSI has always taken the challenges in its stride and has made consistent efforts to excel at whatever is done. Though over the years, there has been a very positive feedback collected from students, renewed focus is needed to ensure that the results remain consistent with pandemic threatening the traditional ways of learning. To ensure adequate engagement of students using online tools, teachers have to be more creative and informative at the same time. Additional training and skill development sessions can be helpful. Students have shown resilience and grit to overcome challenges in the past and have blossomed in face of adversities. However, with rapidly changing face of education, students and teachers alike have to transform to keep pace and remain relevant.