

**POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN DISTANCE
EDUCATION (PGDDE)**

Term-End Examination

June, 2016

ES-313 : LEARNER SUPPORT SERVICES

Time : 3 hours

Maximum Weightage : 75%

Note : (i) Attempt all the three questions.

(ii) All the three questions carry equal weightage.

1. Answer **any one** of the following questions in about **1200** words :

- (a) What is meant by 'Learner Support Services' in distance education ? Discuss various types of learner support services available in any open university known to you.

OR

- (b) Define 'Counselling' in your own words. Discuss the different forms of counselling introduced in Indira Gandhi National Open University, with examples.

2. Answer **any four** of the following in about **300** words each :

- (a) Explain any two important reasons for seeking counselling in distance education by a distance learner.

- (b) Write a short note on SQ 3R technique used for reading a text.
 - (c) Explain with examples any two types of teaching comments a distance teacher may provide while evaluating an assignment response.
 - (d) Write a short note on continuous assessment.
 - (e) Write in brief what types of library and information services are needed for distance learners.
 - (f) List the important features of study centre of an open university.
3. The following is an excerpt from an actual assignment response (See Appendix - I). Read the response and write your margin comments and global comments on the space provided. Award a grade to the assignment response on a five point scale, using letter grades A, B, C, D and E with notional correlates as excellent, very good, good, satisfactory, and unsatisfactory respectively. After completing the task attach Appendix I to your answer script.

[NOTE : PLEASE TEAR OFF THIS APPENDIX
(ASSIGNMENT-RESPONSE) AND ATTACH TO
YOUR ANSWER SHEET WITH THE ASSESSMENT
SHEET]

Enrollment No. :

Grade :

APPENDIX I

ES-313 : Learner Support Services

Space for Comments

Assignment Response

Question :

What are support services ? How do these services help distance learner ? Evaluate the effectiveness of the support services utilized by you as a distance learner at IGNOU.

Answer :

Learner Support Service is the core of open distance education system. Distance education institutions depend on a variety of media to provide support services to the learners. Apart from the print and non-print media there are many other elements that are used to support distance learners.

Pre-entry stage support services :

At the Pre-entry stage, prospective distance learners are keen to find out or know more about entry requirements, courses and programmes on offer, application processes, tuition, institutional credibility, recognition of certificates and employment opportunities. It is at this stage that prospective learners are guided about the courses and programmes on offer. This will help them make informed choices. Prospective distance learners will also be counseled on course selection and further be informed about fee concessions and fee reimbursement where applicable.

Course life stage support services :

Once the learner has made a choice and enrolled for a course or programme with the institution, he or she may feel insecure about studying at a distance. This could lead to the distance learner feeling dejected and ultimately dropping out of the course or programme. This is when course life support services become vital or are needed. Such services include learner inductions on institutional or organizational instructional systems. It is during these inductions that self-learning materials and

assignments are also issued. Distance education learners are also informed about the available library support services, radio broadcasts, television programmes and teleconferencing. The other support services would include Tutor Marked Assignments (TMAs), evaluation of learner scripts and assignment feedback. They are also helped to come up with individual study time-tables, through learning positive study skills. Counselling support services are also rendered as well as tutoring services and limited face to face sessions. Examination preparation and coaching and the conduct of examinations are also dealt with. After the examinations, their results are communicated to the learners. It is at this stage accurate and relevant data are provided to the learners.

It is also your tutors who will interpret your own ideas on all aspects of the course, marking your assignments and ultimately deciding on a grade for your work (Talbot, 2003).

Post course stage support services :
These support services are provided after the distance learner has sat for the required examination. This involves communicating final results

and information about convocations. It also involves career progress advice and future prospects.

How do these support services help distance learners ?

Support services are crucial to distance learners in that first and foremost, they help prospective distance learners to make informed choices about their courses or programmes of study at the pre-entry stage. Thereafter, once they have enrolled, course life support services help sustain the motivation of distance learners such that they end up completing the course as opposed to dropping out.

Isolation can be very destructive. The general support that is available from other students on the same course can give a great boost to your flagging morale, especially when you find that others have found out a particular unit of the course materials just as difficult as you have (Talbot, 2003).

Effectiveness of support services provided by IGNOU

As a distance learner at the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), I find the self-learning instructional materials and assignments highly effective, well

written and fair enough to follow and use. The language used is not difficult to understand. IGNOU also allows for its learners to visit the Library on-line. There are also chat platforms with fellow learners, which help break the issue of isolation to some extent.

Though these are facilities for face-to-face counselling and other administrative support, I did not face any urgency to attend those sessions.
