

DIRECTORATE OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION (DOTE), CHENNAI - 600025
GUIDELINES FOR COMMENCEMENT OF DIPLOMA COURSES FOR WORKING
PROFESSIONALS IN POLYTECHNIC COLLEGES

(Effective from the Academic Year 2025–26)

1. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the provisions of the AICTE Approval Process Handbook (2024–25 to 2026–27) and the AICTE Guidelines for Working Professionals, the Directorate of Technical Education (DOTE), Chennai, issues the following guidelines for AICTE-approved institutions to offer Diploma programmes for Working Professionals from the Academic Year 2025–2026.

The objective is to enable employed individuals in industry and service sectors to upgrade their technical skills and qualifications without interrupting their employment, thereby strengthening industry-academia collaboration and enhancing productivity.

These programmes are intended to facilitate working professionals in improving their qualifications, competencies, and technical expertise while continuing their employment, which promotes flexibility and lifelong learning.

2. PERMITTED COURSES AND INTAKE

- **Course Limit:** Each AICTE-approved institution may offer a maximum of 3 Diploma programmes for Working Professionals.
- **Intake Capacity:** The sanctioned intake for each course shall be 30 seats (supernumerary).

Minimum Enrollment: A minimum of one-third (i.e., 10 candidates) of the approved intake per course is required to initiate the programme.

3. COURSE FEE

- **Course Fee:** The prescribed course fee for Diploma programmes offered to Working Professionals shall be ₹15,000 - ₹35,000 per year.
- **Fee Restrictions:** Institutions are strictly prohibited from levying any additional fees towards academic, development, beyond those approved by the DOTE.

4. DURATION AND CONDUCT OF PROGRAMME

- **Duration:** The duration of the Diploma programme shall be a minimum of two years, equivalent to the lateral entry scheme. Additional semester(s) may be incorporated, if necessary, to fulfill the prescribed contact hours as per regulatory norms. The maximum period of the study shall be 5.5 Years.
- **Class Schedule:** Classes shall be conducted during evening hours or at other suitable timings that accommodate the professional commitments of working candidates.
- **Mode of Delivery:** The programme shall follow a hybrid model (Online/Offline). Candidates are required to attend in-person sessions at the institution or industry during designated periods, in accordance with AICTE guidelines.
- **Monitoring and Reporting:** The **Head of the Department (HoD) of respective courses shall be responsible** for overseeing the conduct and attendance of online classes. **Monthly reports** on attendance and academic delivery must be submitted to the **Principal** (Head of the Institution). These reports will be subject to semester-wise review by **Flying Squad**.

5. APPROVAL PROCESS

Institutes must obtain an Approval/Extension of Approval (EOA) for the corresponding Year of Admission from AICTE and also obtain a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Commissioner of Technical Education, Chennai. The Commissioner of Technical Education, Chennai, is authorized to issue NOCs and oversee compliance.

- A non-refundable processing fee of ₹25,000/- per course is applicable for the NOC inspection and visit. A dedicated team will visit the Institute for inspection process.
- Prior to the issuance of the NOC, an inspection committee constituted by the Directorate will assess the institution's compliance status and infrastructure readiness to deliver the programme effectively.

6. ADMISSION PROCESS AND RESERVATION POLICY

- Admissions and Reservation shall follow State/Board policy.
- Vacant seats may be allotted to candidates from other States residing within a 50 km radius, who are currently employed in Central or State Government departments, Public Sector Undertakings, Private Limited companies, or MSME organizations.
- During admission the candidates should provide **Proof of employment, Bonafide certificate from the Industry HR department, NOC certificate from the Industry without fail.**

7. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR CANDIDATES

- **Employment:** Candidates must be currently employed in Central/ State Government departments, Private, Public Limited companies, or MSME organizations located within a 50 Km radius of the institution offering the programme.
- **Work Experience:** A minimum of 1 year of full-time/regular work experience
- **Educational Qualification:** Applicants must possess academic credentials equivalent to those prescribed for lateral entry into the **Second Year** of diploma programmes (as per DOTE norms).

8. INSTITUTE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Approval from AICTE

- Mandatory recognition or affiliation to offer diploma programs.

2. NOC from DOTE

- No Objection Certificate for running special programs for working professionals.

3. Adequate Infrastructure

- Classrooms, labs, library, internet access suitable for flexible/evening/weekend sessions.

4. Qualified Faculty

- Utilize the existing faculties and guest lecturers(if required) to manage the classes in flexible timings.

5. Curriculum Adaptability

- As per industry needs and AICTE/DOTE norms with minimal academic compromise.

6. Flexible Class Scheduling

- Evening/weekend/online modes to suit working professionals.

7. Attendance and Assessment Plan

- Regulated attendance of 75% and evaluation framework are mandatory.

8. Student Support Services

- Academic counselling, grievance redressal, and access to learning materials are mandatory.

9. Monitoring & Reporting Mechanism

- Regular updates to DOTE/concerned authority on course delivery and student progress to be ensured.

10. Infrastructure Requirements

- No additional infrastructure is required. Existing classrooms, laboratories and library facilities shall be utilized.

9. INDUSTRY REQUIREMENTS:

- The Industry signing MOU with the Institution must be a registered company as per Industries act.
- Industry should have minimum 30 staff strength.
- Industry must have a Training center/ Smart room which should accommodate atleast 30 members.

10. FACULTY AND STAFF REQUIREMENTS

- **Faculty Appointments:** Since this programme is intended to offer diploma courses for working professionals with flexible timings, the faculty requirements can be effectively managed through the existing teaching staff, supplemented by guest lecturers as needed.
- **Engagement of Faculty and Industry Experts:** Existing faculty members of the institution, as well as qualified professionals from industry, may be engaged to deliver the programme. Such engagements shall be compensated with an honorarium of ₹300 per theory session and ₹200 per practical session, as per Government guidelines. Faculty members assigned to visit Industries in

connection with their academic responsibilities are eligible to claim TA/DA in accordance with applicable Government norms.

- **Utilization of Technical and Support Staff:** Existing technical and supporting staff may also be deployed for programme-related activities. Their contributions shall be recognized through additional honorarium, as per the institution's internal policies.

11. INSTITUTE - INDUSTRY COLLABORATION

- Institution shall sign MOUs with maximum of five different Industries per course for which approval is sought.
- Each participating institution is required to execute a formal MoU with the employer or industry partner of the enrolled working professionals. This MoU must be finalized and duly signed before the commencement of admissions. No candidate shall be admitted without a valid MoU in place between the institution and the respective employer.
- Industry is responsible for ensuring that the registered employee completes the course.
- The MoU must include,
 - Roles and responsibilities of both the institution and the company.
 - Course fee details and payment responsibility.
 - Academic schedule, attendance monitoring, and assessment provisions.
 - A compliance clause with DOTE guidelines.
- For each Diploma course offered under the Working Professional Programme, academic monitoring shall be jointly undertaken by an Industry-Nominated Faculty and an Institution Faculty.
- The **Industry-Nominated Faculty** shall serve as a mentor, offering practical insights and industry-relevant guidance to enhance the learning experience.
- The **Institution Faculty** shall be responsible for academic delivery, evaluation, and maintenance of records, ensuring adherence to all regulatory and quality standards prescribed by AICTE and DOTE.

- The Institute Coordinator and the Principal shall ensure effective coordination between both faculty members and uphold the integrity and compliance of the programme.
- For candidates working in Government departments and public sector undertakings, only an NOC is obtained from concerned department.

12. ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS AND CREDIT TRANSFER

Curriculum and Evaluation: Total credit, assessment methodologies, and evaluation procedures are listed below .

- The total credits required for completing the course is 80 Credits.
 - Out of the total credits, **8 credits** can be awarded for Working professionals **by evaluating their skills in respective industries exempting one practical course per semester.**

- In the remaining **72 credits**,

If the course type is **Theory**, it should be learned by **hybrid (Offline / Online)** mode of study. However minimum of 50 % of the syllabus should be covered Offline at the Institution.

If the course type is **Practical** , it should be learned only by **Offline mode of study.**

If the course type is **Practicum** , it shall be learned by (**Online / Offline**)mode of study.However minimum of 50 % of the theory and all laboratoryexperiments should be learned Offline at the Institution.

NOTE:

Working professionals **may opt** to earn up to **25 credits out of the total 72 credits** through **MOOCs, SWAYAM, NPTEL**, or any **DoTE-recognized (Directorate of Technical Education)** massive open online course. (This is an **optional provision**, not a mandatory requirement) . The subjects or papers chosen should **align with the curriculum prescribed for regular students.**

- In the case of working professionals undertaking an NPTEL course, the conversion procedure from consolidated score to grade is detailed below.

| Consolidated score in NPTEL Exam | Grade |
|---|--------------|
| 81–100 | O |
| 71–80 | A+ |
| 61–70 | A |
| 51–60 | B+ |
| 40–50 | B |

- **Practical Course Requirements:** Credits for practical components must be earned exclusively through physical attendance at the Institution. The Head of the Department (HoD) of respective courses shall ensure that practical sessions are scheduled flexibly to accommodate at the suitable time of working professionals.

13. DOCUMENTS FOR NOC:

1. Request Letter from Institution Head

- Addressed to The Commissioner of Technical Education, DOTE, seeking NOC for the specific diploma program(s).

2. Institution Profile

- Overview of institution: year of establishment, affiliation, infrastructure, staff, etc.

3. Industry profile

- Name and address of Industry, Nature of the business/sector, Industry registration / License proof, Number of candidates eligible for the program, Letter

of intent from the industry for sponsoring candidates, Facilities available in the Industry for training, Nomination of Industry mentor.

4. AICTE Approval Copy (if applicable)

- Proof of approval for running technical/diploma programs.

5. Processing Fee Cheque:

- **Demand Draft (DD)** in the name of “The Commissioner of Technical Education” a non-refundable processing fee of **₹25,000/- per course** should be enclosed.

6. Proposed Course Details

- Syllabus, duration, mode of delivery (evening/weekend), and curriculum structure.

7. List of Faculty Members

- Details of qualified staff available for the proposed program (full-time and guest faculty).

8. Industry Collaboration Proof

- MoU or agreement with industry partner(s) employing the professionals. The MoU must be signed by the Head of the Institution and an authorized representative of industry partner. **Institution shall sign not more than five MOUs with Industries per course for which approval is sought.**

9. Infrastructure Availability Report

- Details of classrooms, labs, library, and other facilities to support the course.

10. Tentative Academic Calendar

- Timeline for course commencement, practicals, assessments, etc.

11. Undertaking/Declaration

- Assuring adherence to DOTE norms, fee structure, and quality standards.

14. TRANSPARENCY AND REPORTING

- **Public Disclosure:** Institutions offering Diploma programmes for Working Professionals are required to publish comprehensive details of each course Including intake capacity, eligibility criteria, and programme structure on their official website prior to the commencement of admissions.
- **Annual Reporting:** Institutions must submit annual reports to the DOTE detailing enrolment statistics, academic performance, and programme outcomes for each course offered under this scheme.
- **Regulatory Authority:** The DOTE reserves the right to conduct inspections and, if necessary, withdraw approval in cases of non-compliance with the prescribed norms and guidelines.

15. EFFECTIVE DATE

These guidelines shall come into effect from the Academic Year 2025–2026 and shall remain in force until further revisions are issued by the DOTE, Chennai, in accordance with the provisions of the AICTE Approval Process Handbook (APH).