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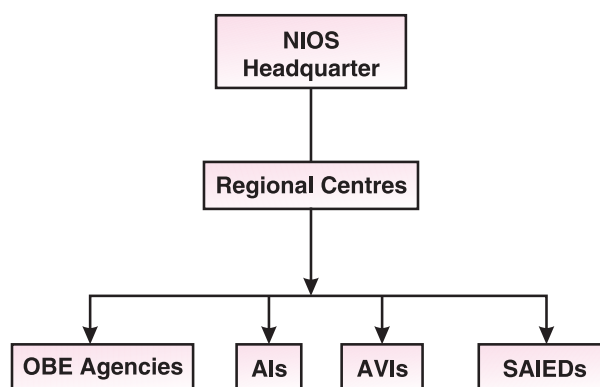
NIOS: An Introduction

The National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) was set up by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India as an autonomous organization in 1989 by amalgamating Open School project of CBSE started in 1979. It was known as National Open School till 2002.

NIOS provides educational opportunities using distance and open learning methods to persons who wish to study and qualify for a better tomorrow. The Mission of NIOS is to provide *education for all* with special concern for girls and women, rural youth, working people, SC/ST, physically and mentally challenged and other disadvantaged groups.

1.1 Functioning of NIOS

- NIOS operates through a network of 16 Regional Centres, 2 Sub Regional Centres, five departments at Headquarter and more than 3,000 Accredited Institutions (AIs) about 1480 Accredited Vocational Institutes (AVIs) in India, Nepal and Middle East.
- NIOS has some Special Accredited Institutions for Education of the Disadvantaged (SAIED) to cater to the needs of physically and mentally challenged people, socially and geographically isolated, and disadvantaged sections of society such as street children, working children, rural women and SC/ST.
- Admission in vocational education courses is open round the year. One can seek admission in Vocational Courses through AVI or can directly register one self through On-line mode.
- Self Learning package is provided to the learners which include printed material, audio and video programmes.
- Selected Academic and Vocational Education programmes are telecast nationwide on Doordarshan Channel.
- Practical Training Programmes (PTPs) is conducted by the AVIs/SAIEDs.
- Public Examinations are held twice a year in April-May and October-November.



Organisational structure of NIOS

1.2 Salient Features

- **No Age Limit:** There is no upper age limit for registration to NIOS courses.
- The minimum age for enrolment in Secondary Courses and for Vocational Courses is 14 years and for Senior Secondary Courses is 15 years and 18 years for some courses (completed on or before 31st July of the year of admission).
- **Choice in Medium of Instructions:** NIOS offers its Courses mainly in Hindi, English, and Urdu mediums. Students may, however, write the examinations in any Indian language included in the Constitution of India.
- **Choice of Subjects:** You can choose any subject combination from the subjects offered in the courses of study.
- **Combination of Academic and Vocational Subjects:** One stand alone vocational subject

mentioned in Table - I on page 12-18 can be combined with academic courses at Secondary level and Senior Secondary level.

- **Validity of Registration:** You can complete your course in a maximum period of **five years** from the year of registration.
- **Flexibility in Examination:** You can avail maximum of **nine chances** to appear in public examinations spread over a period of **five years**.
- **Credit Accumulation:** You can choose to appear in any one or more subjects in an examination and earn credit till all the subject(s) required for certification are successfully completed.
- **Transfer of Credit:** Under this scheme, you may transfer your pass credits maximum of two subjects from CBSE and other selected Boards in the academic courses.
- **Re-admission:** The ex-students of NIOS who have completed their validity period of five years of admission, but could not complete the Course, are eligible to take Re-admission. The credit(s) of maximum of four subjects may be transferred for the fresh admission, if these subjects were passed during last ten years.

1.3 Courses of Study

NIOS provides education up to pre-degree level to those who for one reason or the other could not or did not make use of the formal education system. NIOS offers the following courses to meet the needs and requirements of such group of learners (However it needs to be made clear that open schooling is for all learners of the society and offers the promise of being the mainstream learning system like the present day formal schooling system at some point of time in future).

1.3.1 Open Basic Education (OBE)

The NIOS has introduced the Open Basic Education (OBE) Programme as an alternative educational programme to align with the objective of Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India, to provide Basic Education to all children, youth and adults in the

country under its *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)*. OBE programmes of NIOS is equivalent to the Elementary Education Programme of the formal education system. It is offered at the following three levels:

Level A: equivalent to class 3

Level B: equivalent to class 5

Level C: equivalent to class 8

1.3.2 Secondary Course

This course is equivalent to 10th standard of the formal schooling system. One can join this course irrespective of any formal pre-qualification. Successful completion of minimum of five subjects is necessary for obtaining a certificate. Wide range of subjects are available to choose from. The course may be completed in a minimum period of one year to a maximum of 5 years.

1.3.3 Senior Secondary Course



A training programme in progress

This Course is designed for those who have passed X standard or equivalent examination and would like to continue their education towards a Senior Secondary Certification, equivalent to XII standard. The course is recognized by many boards of school education and by several universities for admission to higher education. The list of Boards and Universities recognizing NIOS certificates is available at Annexure 'G'. *Details of above two courses are available in the Prospectus for Academic Courses.*

1.3.4 Vocational Education Programmes

NIOS also offers vocational education courses at school level keeping in view the needs of target groups. Presently 88 courses are on offer in the broad areas of Engineering & Technology, Health & Paramedical, Home Science & Hospitality Management, Computer & Information Technology, Business & Commerce, Agriculture and Teacher Training etc.



Vocational Certificate Course in Bee Keeping.



NIOS students in one of Vocational (Carpentry) Training Programme.

1.3.5 Life Enrichment Courses

NIOS offers some subjects as Life Enrichment Courses viz., Paripurna Mahila (Women Empowerment), Yog, and Hindustani Music etc. These courses are meant for self development and enrichment of knowledge. No examination is conducted for these courses. Some of these courses are also available as Certificate Courses for which the examination is conducted.

NIOS is an Open Learning Institution for school level courses as well as examining and certifying authority by itself.

NIOS is one of the National Boards like CBSE and CISCE.