

Access Audit – SH College, Thevara

17th October, 2011

Access audit is the first step towards improving accessibility. An access audit is an important tool to identify barriers within a building and also external areas such as play spaces, car parking etc, the audit provides a base line assessment against which initial recommendations can be made. With the results of the access report, service providers are better equipped to bring key personnel and management to specific meetings to discuss what they are able to achieve within the short and long term frames.

Introduction

Sacred Heart College has established Equal Opportunity Centre to ensure the students are provided the equal opportunities in the college as the name indicates. The centre has an office in an accessible place in the ground floor.

Building Type – College building is two storeyed.

Users of the building – over 1500 students and 150 members of staff use the building. Many exams are conducted in the college on Saturdays and Sundays. Computer lab is used for exams.

Purpose of the audit

The purpose of this audit is to assess the accessibility of the college buildings for all its users. The audit examined horizontal and vertical circulation, facilities and its accessibility etc.

Major Findings

Parking - No parking area for the disabled in the entrance near the main gate. Parking should be within 30 meters of the main entrance of the building with a minimum dimension 3600mmX 5000mm.

Sign boards - Parking area should have international symbol of accessibility painted on the ground and also a signboards. There needs to be directional signs guiding people to the accessible parking. There are no signboards for PwDs. Sign boards can be in Braille indicating accessible places and facilities (parking space, toilets, lift/ramp, telephone, water facility etc).

Lift – Though the college is two storeyed, no lift facility is available. So the access to the various departments is denied for the PwDs. A lift can be constructed with the

Ramp - Though the ramp is there in the main entrance, it is insufficient for its purpose. The level difference in the beginning and the end is to be merged to provide unhindered access to wheelchair users.

There is no ramp in the main entrance. It would be good if the college could provide a ramp in the main entrance – this would provide an easy access to the portico from porch area

Bridge between main building and north building is inaccessible because of the steps in both sides of the bridge. Though it would be reduced

Stairs - Handrail is provided only on one side of the stairs. Handrails in contrast colours should be provided on both sides of the stairs at two levels - 700mm and 850mm. It should extend beyond the first and last step also. Round handrails with 30mm diameter in the lower one and 45mm for the top.

If possible steps' edges to have colour contrasted band 50mm, which benefits person with low vision to make out the depth and height of each step. Steps are slippery – during the rainy season it can be more slippery. Nosing of steps can be avoided.

Thresholds - Threshold/height difference between corridor and room height is more than 10mm in all doors – it should be reduced or removed or be merged with the floor. Equal opportunity centre is inaccessible – presence of the threshold makes it inaccessible. Library is also inaccessible because of the presence of the threshold. A movable ramp can solve the problem.

Toilets – toilets are totally inaccessible in all floors. Hence at least one accessible toilet should be constructed at least in one floor preferably in the ground floor. Grab bars must be provided in at least one toilet compartment.

Information/fee counter - height of the information/fee counter makes it inaccessible for PwDs.

Water cooler/telephone/washbasin – there are no accessible points for PwDs. At least one accessible point has to be provided in all floors.

Working table/computer table in labs – at least one accessible table has to be provided in each lab.

Gutters on corridor and the bridge between the main building and the north building should be covered. Gaps/holes in the side walls of the stairs should be covered properly.

Accessibility to stage of the main auditorium/Marian Hall/Melesius Hall – by using a temporary ramp it this problem can be solved.

Access to lake view ground and Nadumuttam of the college – a ramp to the Nadumuttam would clear the way to both the places.

Computer lab is not accessible –Because of the height of the threshold, the chavara IT Centre is not accessible for PwDs.

Beams in front of sociology and commerce department – if possible the beam should be removed or and easily identifiable/contrasted colour pattern should be given to the beams.

Showcases and notice boards are protruded in the corridors –

Steps to the Botany practical lab – Steps to the botany practical lab make the lab not accessible.

Pots on the bridge between main building and north building

Priority rating

Accessible Parking

Sign boards

Ramp

Handrails – in the existing staircases

Merging the level difference between class rooms and corridor

Lift – if the fund available

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Though the ramp is there in the main entrance, it is insufficient to its purpose. The level difference in the beginning and the end is to be merged to provide unhindered access to wheelchair users.





Threshold/height difference between corridor and room height is more than 10mm in all doors – it should be reduced or the threshold is removed.

IQAC
office/Equal
Opportunity
Centre –
threshold height
is 41mm



There is no ramp in the main entrance. It would be good if the college could provide a ramp in the main entrance – this would provide an easy access to the portico from porch area.

The height of the information counter and fee counter make these counters inaccessible to the PwDs. A part of the counter can be lowered down so that the PwDs can access it easily.



On the stairs – handrail is provided only on one side of the stairs.

Handrails in contrast colours should be provided on both sides of the stairs at two levels - 700mm and 850mm. it should extend beyond the first and last step also. Round handrails with 30mm diameter in the lower one and 45mm for the top. If possible steps' edges to have colour contrasted band 50mm, which benefits person with low vision to make out the depth and height of each step.



Nosing of
steps can be
avoided.



Gaps/holes in the side walls should be covered properly

Signboard in
Braille script
can be
provided in
each floor.

Height of the coin box
phone should be
lowered.

Height of the handrails
to the gents' toilet should
be increased.

A two line handrails can
be provided.

Small gutters for drainage facility should be covered.



Because of these steps, the gents' toilet on the 2nd floor is inaccessible to PwDs. There can be an extra toilet for the PwDs.



The width of the toilet is not sufficient for a wheel chair.





Steps to the girls' toilet on the 3rd floor make the toilet inaccessible to PwDs.

Grab bar should be fixed in the toilet
No flushes in the toilets. An additional accessible toilet can be provided.



Level difference between
corridors and classrooms is
more than 10 mm in all
classes



Threshold in the
sociology
department

Beam in front of the sociology and commerce departments – dangerous





No glass holder
near the water
cooler.
Inaccessible for
PwDs

There is no access to a
person with physical
disability to the main
auditorium stage



Showcases and notice boards in the corridors are dangerously protruded out from the wall

At least one of the working tables in the practical labs and computer lab should be lowered.



Projections on the corridor leading to class room can be removed.





Gutters on the bridge between main building and north building should have proper covering

Pots on the
bridge





Steps on the way to botany practical lab make the lab unreachable.

Steps on the two ends of the bridge between the main building and north building



Height of the railing near the steps of botany department should be increased.



No parking space for
PwDs in the parking
area.

Audit Team

