



**INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL SERVICES CENTRES AUTHORITY
(2nd and 3rd Floor, Savvy Pragma, GIFT City, Gandhinagar, Gujarat)**

eF.No.IFSCA-BDev./FU/1/2023-BD

December 14, 2023

CIRCULAR

Subject: Permitting International Branch Campuses (IBCs) and Offshore Educational Centres (OECs) at GIFT-IFSC to avail infrastructure services from Academic Infrastructure Service Providers (AISPs).

Reference is invited to the International Financial Services Centres Authority (Setting up and Operation of International Branch Campuses and Offshore Education Centres) Regulations, 2022 (hereinafter referred to as “the Regulations”), enabling globally reputed foreign universities or foreign educational institutions to set up IBC or OEC in the GIFT International Financial Services Centre (hereinafter referred to as the GIFT IFSC) for offering academic courses/ programmes in permissible subject areas.

2. IFSCA received requests from various stakeholders including foreign universities and foreign educational institutions regarding enabling a framework for providing infrastructure and support services to them in GIFT IFSC. It was suggested that such infrastructure and support services would facilitate these universities and institutions to set up IBCs/ OECs in GIFT IFSC by providing end-to-end campus infrastructure facilities.

3. Considering the above and in order to facilitate setting up of high-quality campus infrastructure facilities in GIFT IFSC, this circular is being issued to specify conditions for IBCs and/or OECs for availing infrastructure and other support services from an AISP. While the AISPs shall be governed as per the provisions of the SEZ Act 2005, applicable rules and regulations, the IBCs/OECs shall adhere to the conditions specified in this circular, for availing their services. The enablement under this circular shall only govern the relationship between AISP and IBC/ OEC and does not apply to an IBC/OEC seeking support services other than Campus Infrastructure Services.

4. **Academic Infrastructure Service Providers** shall mean a service provider providing services to an IBC/OEC, which shall include providing built up campus facility, research and development facility, library, laboratories, incubation centres, teaching classroom, and such other related services.

5. An IBC/OEC, in addition to availing services mentioned in paragraph-4, may also obtain the following incidental support services from the AISP, if available:

- a) **Campus Facility Management services** including services such as campus security, internet facilities, IT infrastructure, day-to-day management and maintenance of campus infrastructure facilities and other related services.
- b) **Student onboarding, Admissions and Student Welfare services** including facilitating entrance examinations, student counselling, facilitating tie-ups and collaborations for hostel facilities, dorms, laundry services, canteen, recreational amenities such as sports grounds, gymnasium, parks, indoor and outdoor activities, swimming pool, necessary helpline(s) such as but not limited to information dissemination, mental health and emotional well-being and other related services.
- c) **Services for recruitment and management of non-academic staff** including providing staffing solutions, recruitment and management of non-academic staff, and other related services. Such services may also include providing necessary training and on-going management and supervision support for such non-academic staff.
- d) **Branding and Marketing services** including strategy, planning and operations for branding and marketing of courses and programmes, conducting promotional activities and awareness campaigns, brand building activities, outreach activities through business development partners and other related services.
- e) **Payroll services** including assisting or providing end-to-end payroll services for the staff employed by the IBC and/or OEC. Necessary technical solutions for payroll administration, compliances, benefits administration, grievance redressal and payroll management and other related services may also form part of these services.
- f) Any other service directly or indirectly supporting or assisting the delivery of courses by IBCs and OECs in IFSC, on a case-to-case basis, upon necessary approval obtained by IBC and/or OEC from the Authority.

6. Eligibility conditions:

The IBC and/or OEC shall avail services from an AISP satisfying the following conditions:

- a) The AISP is incorporated as a separate company in GIFT SEZ;
- b) The AISP have a minimum net worth of 1 million USD or equivalent for providing AIS and the same shall be maintained at all times while providing services to IBC/ OEC;
- c) The AISP or any of its group company shall have at least three years of prior experience of providing similar services to recognized universities/ educational institutions in India or overseas.

7. Obligation of IBC/ OEC:

The IBC and/or OEC availing services from a AISP shall comply with the following provisions:

- a) The IBC or the OEC shall enter into a formal written agreement with AISP.
- b) The agreement shall, *inter-alia*, contain provisions relating to indemnity, intellectual property protection, conflict of interest, financial guarantee, confidentiality and privacy, *force majeure*, insurance, governing law & jurisdiction, dispute resolution

mechanism, responsibility matrix with clear delineation of roles and responsibilities between the IBC and/or OEC and the AISP. The agreement shall also provide adequate mechanism for a smooth transition in case of its termination or expiry ensuring that the interests of students are safeguarded.

- c) The IBC/ OEC shall submit a copy of the agreement to the Authority immediately after its execution and inform the Authority if such agreement is modified or terminated for any reason before its expiry. IBC/ OEC shall however, at all times be responsible for the protection of the interest of the students or other stakeholders, to the satisfaction of the Authority.
 - d) The IBC/ OEC shall provide an undertaking to the Authority that the academic functions of the IBCs and/or OECs, are not outsourced in any manner whatsoever, to the AISP directly or indirectly.
8. This issues with the approval of the Competent Authority.
9. A copy of this circular is available on the website at www.ifsc.gov.in/circular.

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