REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

ON

COURSE CODES AND COLOUR

SCHEME CODES

INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI-112268
July, 2000

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1   Printed material distributed by IGNOU to its students constitutes a significant component of the total study material (printed material, A/V material and CD ROMs). The requirement of the printed material is assessed on the basis of the projected figure of student enrolment in a particular course, while the concerned School takes up the responsibility, as presently followed, for printing the material.

1.2   The Material Production and Distribution Division is responsible for keeping the inventory of the printed material and monitoring its dispatch schedule, so that the study material reaches the student not only well before the commencement of the examinations, but also before the assignments are sent to them.

1.3   The programmes/courses offered by IGNOU cover conventional, multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary schemes, and range from Certificate level to Diploma, to Graduate and Post graduate levels. Therefore, proper codification of these courses and adoption of standardized method of codification is a necessity for inventory management.

1.4   With the increase in the students enrolment, IGNOU has to prepare PERT like charts and networks of the activities for the despatch of material and has to deploy a sizeable work force of daily-wage-workers to handle the huge volume of work. Just to corroborate this point, one may recall the year 1998-99 when IGNOU had handled the despatch of approximately 4.6 lakhs packets of print material to above 1.72 lakhs students dispersed all over the country. For this reason, in spite of IGNOU's regular staff being engaged in the inventory management & material inspection, the deployment of workers on daily wages is inevitable for material handling, packaging and transportation of material to Post Office and warehouses.

Creating computer files of students records, taking print outs of address labels with details of the programmes, and pasting them on lakhs of packets of study material is thus round the year activity at IGNOU; the last of the activities is handled mainly by the unskilled daily wage workers who prepare different sizes of packets of the study material for dispatch.

1.5   It should be seen from above that there are three key areas of activities in which semi-skilled or neo-literate workers are closely involved.

1. Fixing proper bin location and storing the blocks of study material accordingly.

2. Classifying the labels programme-wise.

3. Identification and packaging of study material, fixing the address labels and transportation to Post Offices/warehouses.

1.6.a. In view of the above facts, all programmes/courses have to be given specific codes so that they do not overlap with each other and indicate

clearly the level of programme/course, the discipline and the nature of course. This would eventually help improve the efficiency of workers.

1.6.b. Proper codification will also help in reference service, retrieval and classification of information on students and study material. This would also improve inventory management.

1.7 Further, colour is a versatile and commercial medium that appeals to all visually and sensitizes mind quickly & differently. Hence, chances of mistakes by workers in distinguishing, segregating and packaging of study material would be minimised if the cover pages of the books could be given different colours for the programmes of different schools. Proper colour codification will also help in referral service, retrieval and classification of information on students and study material.

APPOINTMENT OF THE COMMITTEE

1.8 The Academic Council of IGNOU in its 22nd meeting held on 7th October 1999 has taken a decision to entrust the responsibility of giving course codes and colour scheme codes for all the programmes/courses of the University to the Planning & Development Division. In accordance with this decision, the Vice-Chancellor appointed a committee comprising the following members for completing the task of giving course codes and colour scheme codes for all the programmes of the university.

    1. Prof. Ram Pratap   Chairman
       Director, Planning and Development Division

    2. Prof. B.S. Saraswat
       Professor, School of Sciences

    3. Prof. B.B. Khanna
       Professor, School of Management Studies

    4. Dr. A.R. Khan
       Reader, School of Social Sciences

    5. Dr. A.S. Narang
       Reader, School of Social Sciences

    6. Dr. Anurag Saxena
       Dy. Director, Student Registration and Evaluation

    7. Dr. Akshya Kumar
       Reader, School of Computer and Information Sciences

    8. Dr. C.G. Naidu   Convener
       Dy. Director, Planning and Development Division

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.9. The terms of reference of the committee are:

(a) Course Codification and Colour Scheme Codes of new and revised Courses/Programmes.

(b) Review and Re-codification of old Courses/Programmes.

MEETINGS HELD

1.10 The committee held five meetings on the following dates:

First meting	-	February 09, 2000
Second meeting	-	February 17, 2000
Third meeting	-	May 26, 2000
Fourth meeting	-	July 12. 2000
Fifth meeting	-	July 18, 2000

II.   PROGRAMME CODES

INTRODUCTION

2.1   Programme codes are unique alphabetic codes assigned to programmes for identification purpose.

2.2   A Programme code can have a limited number of characters (usually not more than seven Characters).   The alphabetical characters should identify certain parameters about the programme like the level of the programme, the subject area, the specialisation features of the programme etc. For example, if a programme is offered at Master's degree level, the code may start with 'M'. If the subject area covered is Business Administration, it can be abbreviated as 'BA'. In addition if the same programme is offered with specialisation in Information Technology it can be abbreviated as MBA (IT) or simply MBAIT.

BRIEF REVIEW OF THE PRESENT PRACTICE

2.3   Largely, the practice that is being followed IGNOU, is based on two parameters viz. (a) the level of the programme and (b) the subject area of the programme. For example, PGDHE stands for Post-Graduate Diploma (PGD – indicates Post-Graduate Diploma – programme level) in Higher Education (HE stands for Higher Education – subject area). However, it is observed that there are certain deviations form this practice. For example, the programme on 'Certificate in Participatory Project Planning or Sahabhagi Vikas Niyojan in Hindi' is coded a SAVANI. Although this code indicates the subject area of the programme in Hindi it does not indicate the level at which the programme is offered. Similarly, the programme in Master of Business Administration (Banking & Finance) is codes as MPB. Again here MPB stands for management programme in banking and does not indicate the level of the programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2.4   Programme code will have **two parts** consisting of alphabetic characters.

2.4.a. The **first part** of the programme code should indicate the level of the programme, like Certificate-C, Post-Graduate Certificate-PGC, Diploma-D, Advanced Diploma-AD, Post Graduate Diploma-PGD, Bachelor Degree-B, Master's Degree-M, etc. if the faculty feels that the conventional codes like M.A., M.Sc., M.Com. etc. are more convenient and meaningful they can be adopted without any modification.

2.4.b. The **second part** of the programme code should indicate the subject area of the programme like Food and Nutrition-FN, Rural Development-RD, Distance Education-DE etc.

2.4.c. Therefore, the programme code for Certificate Programme in Food & Nutrition will be-CFN, Post-Graduate Certificate in Food & Nutrition-PGCFN etc. Similarly, a Master level programme in Chemistry will have a code MCH. On the other hand, if the faculty wishes to use conventional code M.Sc. for Master's level programme in science with sepcialisation in chemistry then the programme code will be M.Sc. (CH).

III. COURSE CODE

INTRODUCTION

3.1.   Course codes are unique Alpha-Numeric Codes assigned to courses for identification purpose.

Although there is no unique way of giving course codes, one may keep in mind the following:

The course codes can have up to FIVE to TEN characters which are designed in such a way that one can easily recognise and memorise them. The code may start with alphabetical characters followed by numerical characters or a combination of them used alternately viz.

XYZ012
XY 01Z2

3.1.a.   The Alphabetic Characters can be designed in such a way as to identify:

(i)   The academic units involved in the development of course.

(ii)   The course level (under graduate degree / post-graduate diploma / postgraduate degree etc.).

(iii)   Nature of the course (practical/theory/lab/project etc.)

(iv)   Any other parameter with which course can be easily recognisd.

3.1.b.   The Numeric Characters can be used to identify:

(i)   To recognise whether a course is fresh or revised.

(ii)   The serial number of the course.

(iii)   Number of credits in the course (if desired).

(iv)   The number of blocks in the course (if desired).

3.2.   In practice, however, the course code should not be too short or lengthy. If a course code is too short it may not provide sufficient information for easy identification of the course. On the other hand, if it is too lengthy it is difficult to understand, remember, and pronounce easily. Length of each parameter within course code should also be optimised. For example, the discipline code should be either 1 or 2 alphabetic characters. Similarly, the code that indicates (a) theory/practical component and (b) language through which the course is offered should be 1 alphabetic character. Similarly, the course level can have one numeric character and individual course 2 or 3 numeric characters.

BRIEF REVIEW OF THE PRESENT PRACTICE

A random look at the present method of assigning codes to various courses offered by IGNOU reveals the following:

3.3.   There is no uniform method of codification; different schools/disciplines use different approaches in fixing the codes. The method varies not only from programme to programme but also within a programme. Some schools and/or disciplines are using course codes, which have some kind of relationship with their School, level of the programme, and course sequence.

For example, School of Education uses six characters to identify a course. The first two alphabetic characters (ES) are used to identify the School through which a course was developed/delivered, the third digit (-) used to differentiate between alpha characters and numeric characters, the fourth digit – a numeric character – to identify the level of the programme (1 for certificate, 2 for undergraduate, and 3 for postgraduate degree etc.), and the last two numeric characters to identify the individual course. Therefore, ES-101 stands for: (a) the course belongs to School of Education, (b) certificate level, and (c) the name of the course "understands the Elementary School Child'. Similarly, '2' indicates Under-Graduate courses and '3' indicates Post-Graduate courses in the fourth character of the course code.

3.4.   The School of Engineering and Technology also adopted a similar system of coding with marginal differences (blank space in place of '-'   and fourth numeric character indicates whether a course is basic in nature or of higher order level).

3.5.   All other Schools are following different methods of coding for different programmes and for different courses within a programme.

3.6.   For some of the programmes of (a) School of Humanities (programmes: DCH, DCE, CTE, PGDT), (b) School of Social Sciences (programmes: BLS, MLIS, CDM), (c) School of Health Sciences (Programme: PGDMCH,) (d) School of Computer and Information Sciences (programme: CIC), and (e) School of Continuing Education (programmes: CFN, DECE, DNHE, CNCC,) the programme code itself is course code (alphabetic characters) plus one or two characters of numeric code to identify the course title.

3.7.   For the BDP programme there is no clear pattern of codes across the courses. For example, all the elective courses of School of Humanities, Commerce Discipline, and School of Social Sciences start with 'E'. EEG-01 stands for elective course (E) in English discipline (EG) of the BDP programme and the title of the course is 'Language through Literature (01)'. On the other hand, School of Sciences uses 'E' for elective course at the end of alpha characters (MTE-01 stands for elective course (E) in Mathematics (MT) of BDP programme and the title of the course is 'Calculus (01)').

Again, in this programme all application oriented courses starts with 'A' and the next two alphabetic characters indicates some relationship with course title and not with the discipline developed (example: ASP-1 stands for application oriented course in 'Secretarial Practice'). However, when two disciplines develop the same application oriented course, the code indicates all the three parameters viz. nature of the course title of the course, and the respective discipline (example: AFW(H) stands for application oriented course in 'Feature Writing (Hindi)' and AFW(E) stands for application oriented course in 'Feature Writing (English)').

3.8. The School of Sciences uses 'L' to denote laboratory course at the end of course code (PHE-12(L) stands for an elective laboratory course of Physics discipline and the title of the course 'Physics laboratory – III'). However, the School of Health Science uses 'P' for practical course in between two numeric characters (HS1P1 stands for course is developed by Health Sciences for B.Sc. Nursing programme and it is a practical course). Library Science discipline uses 'P' for practical course after course code (BLS-3 (P) etc.). The School of Engineering and Technology do not use any special character for laboratory course and uses separate course code (example: ET 573 stands for 'Laboratory-1 (ADWRE)). School of Computer and information Sciences and School of Continuing Education do not indicate any type of code for practical course.

3.9. Similarly, School of Computer and Information Sciences is using CS for BCA and MCA courses, CC for certificate in network oriented office computing courses, and CIC for certificate in computing courses.

3.10. The School of Management Studies uses alphabetic characters 'MS' to all the management science courses and numeric characters 1 to 11 to denote basic courses, 21 to 26, 41 to 46. 51 to 58, 61 to 68 etc. to denote specialisation courses and 91 to 99 to denote integrative courses and 100 for the project course. Similarly, the School uses 'BS' for bachelor in Business Administration and 'IBO' for Diploma in International Business Administration.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee recommends the following to identify a course:

3.11. That the code of a course should consist two parts namely, (a) **Alphabetic part** and (b) **Numeric part**. The symbol '-' differentiates alphabetic part and numeric part to make the distinction and easy readability.

3.11.a. **Alphabetic Part** will have two compulsory and one optional parameters. These are:

(i) course level (*compulsory – one character width* – recommended codes are given in Table-a.1).

(ii) discipline/area of studies code (**compulsory – two characters width** – some of the recommended codes are given in Table-a.2).

(iii)   nature of the course (*optional – one character width –* recommended codes are given in Table a.3.)

A course code will start with course level code followed by discipline/area of studies code and nature of the course code. In other words the course level code will prefix the discipline/area of studies code and the nature of the course code will suffix the discipline/area of studies code.

3.11.a.1   A course code indicating the course level will have one of the following codes (compulsory).

Table a.1

Programme/Course Level	Recommended Code
❖ Courses up to undergraduate level (like Certificate, Diploma, Bachelor's Degree etc. having entry qualification at +2 level).	B
❖ Post-Graduate level courses (like Post-Graduate Certificate, post-Graduate Diploma, Master's Degree etc.).	M
❖ Courses at the Research Degree level (M.Phil., Ph.D., etc.).	R
❖ Awareness Courses	N

3.11.a.2 Table a.2 indicates the list of disciplines along with the recommended codes. In addition, there are some area of studies like tourism, women's empowerment, consumer protection etc. developed by various disciplines. The committee is of the view that each area of study should also have a unique code reflecting the area of study. Some of the identified areas of studies along with recommended codes are given in the Table.

Table a.2

School	Discipline/Area of study	Discipline/ Area of study Code
1. School of Management	(a) Management	MS
	(b) Commerce	CO
2. School of Sciences	(a) Mathematics	MT
	(b) Physics	PH
	(c) Chemistry	CH
	(d) Life Sciences	LS
3. School of Humanities	(a) English	EG
	(b) Hindi	HD
4.School of Social Sciences	(a) Economics	EC
	(b) Political Science	PS
	(c) Public Administration	PA
	(d) Sociology	SO
	(e) History	HI

	(f) Library Science	LI
	(g) Tourism Studies	TS
	(h) Consumer Protection	CP
5. School of Education	(a) Education	ES
	(b) Distance Education	DE
6. School of Continuing Education	(a) Rural Development	RD
	(b) Women Education	WE
	(c) Journalism & Mass Communication	JM
	(d) Food & Nutrition	FN
	(e) Child Development	CD
7.School of Engineering & Technology	(a) Engineering & Technology	ET
8. School of Health Sciences	(a) Health Sciences	HS
9. School of Computer & Information Sciences	(a) Computer Science	CS

However, it may be noted that the list indicated in the Table is not exhaustive. The list of disciplines/area of studies left out (if any) and codes for future disciplines and area of studies may be decided by the concerned discipline or area of studies in consultation with the nodal agency.

3.11.a.3.   The following codes are recommended to indicate the nature of a course (optional code):

Table a.3

Nature of Course	Recommended Code
❖ Lab./Practicals/Computing	L
❖ Project	P
❖ Elective	E
❖ Foundation	F
❖ Application oriented	A

Note: If no code is indicated it is assumed that it is a theory course.

The committee is of the view that each School/Discipline may follow one of the codes listed above depending on the nature of the course. However, if there is any difficulty in assigning these codes the concerned School/Discipline may decide any other code in consultation with the nodal agency.

Thus, a course at the level of Master's degree in Tourism Studies will have one of the following (*alphabetic part*) codes depending on the nature of the course.

MTS   indicates a course in Tourism Studies at the level of Master's degree (observe nature of course code is omitted).

MTSP   indicates a project course in Tourism Studies at the level of Master's degree.

3.11.b. The **Numeric Part** will have <u>three characters</u> indicating two parameters related to a course. The parameters along with their character length are:

(i)   Whether a course is fresh/revised (one character), and

(ii)   Individual course number (two characters).

The first character of the numeric part indicates whether a course is fresh (0 stand for a fresh course) or revised course (1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9, indicates the course is revised one in that order) followed by individual course number (two characters 01 to 99). In other words the individual course number will suffix the course code indicating whether a course is fresh or revised. The individual course number having tow numeric characters is left to the discretion of concern discipline/area of study/school.

3.11.c. Thus, a course at the level of Master's degree in Tourism Studies will have one of the following codes depending on the nature of the course.

MTS-015   indicates that a course is:

__ at Master's degree level (M)

__ in Tourism Studies (TS)

__ it is a fresh course (0)

__ having serial number 15

(observe that the 'nature of course' code is omitted in this course code).

MTS-115   indicates that a course is:

__ at Master's degree level (M)

__ in Tourism Studies (TS)

__ it is a first revision course (1)

__ having serial number 15

(observe that the 'nature of course' code is omitted in this course code).

MTS-215   Indicates that a course is:

    __ at Master's degree level (M)

    __ in Tourism Studies (TS)

    __ it is a second revision course (2)

    __ having serial number 15

    (observe that the 'nature of course' code is omitted in this course code).

etc

MTSP-015   indicates that a course is :

    __ at Master's degree level (M)

    __ in Tourism Studies (TS)

    __ it is a project course (P)

    __ it is a fresh course (0)

    __ having serial number 15

MTSP-115   indicates that a course is:

    __ at Master's degree level (M)

    __ in Tourism Studies (TS)

    __ it is a project course (P)

    __ it is first revision course (1)

    __ having serial number 15

MTSP-215   indicates that a course is:

    __ at Master's degree level (M)

    __ in Tourism Studies (TS)

    __ it is a project course (P)

    __ it is second revision course (2)

    __ having serial number 15

etc.

The symbol '-' differentiates alphabetic part and numeric part to make the distinction and easy readability.

Thus, in practice a course code will have a minimum of seven characters and maximum of eight characters.

IV.   COLOUR SCHEME

INTRODUCTION

4.1.   Colour Scheme of a course is a unique colour or combination of colours coupled with design assign to the cover pages of the printed material (Blocks) for identification purpose. As stated in course codes, there is no unique way of assigning colour scheme to courses. However, some broad points one can consider are:

1.   There should not be too many colours as many people may not be able to identify and name the colours with marginal differences.

2.   It will be helpful to have a combination of colour(s) and design for easy identification of Course material (Blocks).

3.   Each School can have a unique colour scheme. Alternatively, the colour scheme can be according to the level of programme (Certificate/Diploma/Degree/Post graduate degree etc.).

BRIEF REVIEW OF THE PRESENT PRACTICE

4.2.   At present there is no uniform pattern of colour scheme for different programmes offered by IGNOU. The colour scheme differs from programme to programme, school to school, discipline to discipline but also within a programme, School, discipline.

4.3.   The colour of a block of a course also varies every time it is printed. The reason for this may be because the actual colour might not have been standardised. On the other hand, the printers must be using immediate available colours for varied reasons.

4.4.   A diagram or graph reflecting the course content also appears as a design for many of the courses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

4.5.   **Colour Scheme of Blocks:**   The committee recommends that each school will have a unique and distinct colour of the cover page of the blocks for all the courses/programmes developed by the school. The colours assigned to each school are shown in the following Table. In addition some contrasting colours like Teal, Red, Brown, Blue-grey, Olive-green etc. can be used by future schools in consultation with nodal agency.

School	Colour recommended
1. School of Management	Mustered Yellow
2. School of Sciences	Dark Grey

3. School of Humanities	White
4. School of Social Sciences	Sky Blue
5. School of Education	Navy Blue
6. School of Continuing Education	Light Rose
7. School of Engineering & Technology	Light Orange
8. School of Health Sciences	Bright Green
9. School of Computer and Information Sciences	Light Green

4.6. **Colour Scheme of assignments:** The committee also recommends that the colour scheme of the blocks should be extended to assignments. The cover page of the assignments will have a unique and distinct colour in the form of a strip towards left margin as the university is currently following for letter-heads. The colour of the strip will be same as that of the block cove page of the respective courses.

V. IMPLEMENTATION

5.1. **Course Codes:** The committee recommends that all the schools may switch over to new course codes pattern for all the new courses since they do not have any direct bearing on the services offered to students. However, in case of the courses that are already on offer, the Schools may have some problems in switching over to the new codes from the existing codes. Therefore, the schools may continue with the existing course codes for all those courses on offer till the time they are revised. <u>The committee is of the view that the new course codes scheme will be effective only for new/revised courses.</u> However, if one school/discipline wishes to switch over to new codes immediately even for the courses that are already on offer they may do so if it does not affect any way the students and other course codes already in use.

5.2. **Software:** It appears that there are some problems in using the software by Material Production and Distribution Division (MPDD) for entering the course codes even for the existing course codes because of the limitation of the length of the course code. The committee recommends that a new software (with flexibility option) may be developed in order to avoid these problems.

5.3. **Projects (Course Codes):** In recent times IGNOU has taken up a number of projects on various contemporary issues sponsored by various agencies. Some courses are emerging out of these projects leading to awareness, certificate, diploma etc. programmes. The committee is of the view that the new course codes scheme should be applicable for all the courses/ programmes whether they are the university regular courses/programmes or course/programmes emerging out of projects sponsored.

5.4. **Colour Scheme:** Since the introduction of new colour scheme does not have any bearing on the services offered or activities of the students, all schools may switch over to new colour scheme whenever new printing takes place even for the existing courses.

5.5. Projects (Colour Scheme): The committee is of the view that the new colour scheme of courses will be applicable to all the courses/programmes including those emerging out of projects sponsored by various agencies.

5.6. **Colour Scheme of assignments:** Since the new colour scheme of assignments do not have any bearing on the services offered to the students all school may switch over to new colour scheme of assignments immediately for all the courses including the courses presently on offer.

5.7. **Nodal Agency:** It is essential to see that the above recommendations are implemented properly. There should be a nodal agency that can coordinate with the schools and disciplines/area of studies in implementing the new course codes and colour scheme. The committee recommends that the Planning & Development division can act as a nodal agency.