

SOP - NUTECH Buddy System (NBS)

1. **Introduction.** Buddy system is a concept where new international students (known as "international buddies") are paired with existing local students (known as "local buddies") based on their academic and interest-based similarities. Pairing of local volunteer students with Foreign Students (FSs) will not only give them a great welcoming gesture soon upon arrival but will also assist them in their smooth absorption into the new cultural and educational system of NUTECH.
2. **Aim.** To provide a well-structured and supportive environment for foreign students to ease cultural transition and seamless integration into NUTECH ecosystem.
3. **Objectives**
 - a. **Integration.** To facilitate successful integration of FSs into the university culture.
 - b. **Support.** To provide academic and emotional support to FSs through peer relationships.
 - c. **Embrace EDI.** To boost intercultural acceptance and create a more inclusive and diverse campus environment that celebrates international perspectives.
 - d. **Skills Enhancement.** To develop leadership, intercultural understanding, and global competence skills in local students specially, serving as buddies.
4. **Modus Operandi**
 - a. **Buddy Selection Process.**
 - (1) Admission office will intimate about the number of FSs being inducted to DoU office at least one clear month before their date of arrival. Same number will be communicated to school principals to select local buddies.
 - (2) To ensure that only serious and well-organized students apply for the task, selection criterion for application will be minimum CGPA of 3.0 with no involvement / warnings on academics or misconduct + minimum attendance not less than 80 %.
 - (3) One local buddy each from freshmen (same programme) and senior batch (same department) will be allocated to one FS i.e two local buddies per one FS.
 - (4) Respective schools will give an open call for applications from local students accordingly (Freshmen & Seniors). In case no or a smaller number of students apply than respective departments will nominate the students at their own following the laid down base lines.
 - (5) Departments will select the local buddies, keeping a 10 % of reserve quota to keep a leverage for any additional requirement or for any mid-way changes, if necessitated.
 - (6) Preference will be given to those Hostel students who meet the criterion.
 - (7) Respective departments will conduct Initial interview of shortlisted students to assess suitability based on interpersonal skills, cultural sensitivity, hobbies and motivation.

- (8) Final selection will be done by a committee comprising principals NUSET & NUSIT, DSA and a representative ex Registrar and DoU offices.
- b. **Buddies Allocation**
 - (1) Buddies will be allocated 2-3 weeks before the arrival date of FSs and contact details of either will be shared with each.
 - (2) Departments will pair the buddies basing on their academic discipline similarities and common interests.
 - (3) Gender discipline will be kept in view while buddy allocation.
5. **Duties of Respective HoDs**
 - a. Depute a Focal Person (FP) to handle Buddy related matters.
 - b. All HoDs to collaborate and prepare a training module for the local buddies so that they are apprised of their duties and sensitivities stringed to this important duty. Accountability factor also will be made part of the module i.e consequences in case any buddy is found involved in misuse of this opportunity that results in bringing bad name to the institution.
 - c. Oversee the implementation of the buddy program within their department.
 - d. Regularly meet with FPs & Department Coordinators to know and address challenges and opportunities, if any, and constantly improve the programme based on feedback and best practices.
 - e. Keep the respective principals informed about the programme implementation and suggestions, if any.
6. **Focal Person's (FPs) Responsibilities**
 - a. Identify and recommend high-performing, culturally sensitive students as potential buddies.
 - b. Allocate office hours for buddy pairs to discuss their miscellaneous concerns and resolve them ASAP with intimation to the respective HoDs.
 - c. Collaborate with other departmental FPs on as required basis to ensure comprehensive support for FSs.
 - d. Serve as the primary point of contact for buddies, FSs, faculty, and university administration regarding the program.
 - e. Mediate any conflicts or issues that arise between buddy pairs.
 - f. Suggest buddy replacement to HoD on any unusual occurrence.
7. **Deputed Buddies**
 - a. Establish a good rapport with the Assigned Buddies (ABs) and keep decency and ethics as hallmark of assigned responsibilities.
 - b. Upon arrival, assist ABs with orientation of campus life and help navigate NUTECH student services through: -
 - (1) Tour / introduction to key resources i.e various office locations, SFD canteen, cafeteria, community event spaces, and sports areas.
 - (2) Information on local food, weather, local transportation, banks, mobile phone services, resident life and student clubs.

- c. Provide ongoing support throughout the academic year: -
 - (1) Help with understanding of study techniques and academic expectations.
 - (2) Offer language support, where required.
 - d. Encourage them to take NUTECH Club memberships and organize or participate in cultural activities.
 - e. Report any serious concerns or issues promptly to department FPs.
8. **Office of Student Affairs.** At the conclusion of training module by the respective departments, DSA will brief the selected local buddies on ethical aspects of their duties.
9. **Conclusion.** The Buddy System is a vital initiative aimed at making FSs comfortable by providing friendly, practical and competent assistance upon arrival at NUTECH. By creating a supportive environment for FSs, we can expect that they will become valued members of our community and subsequently our ambassadors across the globe, once they graduate. Through the buddy program, we also aim to equip our students with the intercultural skills and global perspectives necessary for success in their future careers in an increasingly interconnected world. Furthermore, constant review and updating of this SOP will ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness in meeting the evolving needs of our diverse student body. The success of this program hinges upon the active participation and interest taken by all stakeholders.