

MACFAST KNOWLEDGE SCHEME

*An Initiative to Create a Knowledge Society through Knowledge
Dissemination*



Best Practice

MACFAST KNOWLEDGE SCHEME (MAKS)

As a social responsibility programme of the college, MAKS is initiated in 2012 to identify the potential and skillset of students at the school level. It is a programme intended to create a knowledge society through knowledge dissemination using the academic potential of this college and is continuing as one of the best practices. This scheme aims at enhancing the skill set of the students and training them to identify their potential and inherent talents. It also aims at sharing information among the students and to make them competent for appearing for competitive examinations. This scheme is a revelation to the students to make them aware of the opportunities for higher levels of learning and employment.

Objectives of the Practice:

- 1.To identify the inherent potential and talents of the high school students and to encourage them to achieve higher academic goals.
- 2.To provide proper orientation to the students to make them competent and responsible citizens of the society.
- 3.To create a positive attitude and confidence among students for higher levels of achievement.
- 4.To provide career guidance and a career orientation by improving their communication and soft skills.

The Context:

The purpose of education is not only imparting knowledge but also encouraging every individual to work for self-development and social growth. In order to cope with the emerging challenges and increasing competition, it needs a focused approach and a knowledge-oriented paradigm of development. To equip the students to face the challenges, an intensive effort is vital. A comprehensive approach to fulfilling the notion ‘catch them young’ plays a key role in this arena of knowledge dissemination. Right education, right knowledge, the right attitude, enhanced motivation and training from the school level itself is very significant for achieving the full potential of a student.

MACFAST Knowledge Scheme (MAKS) is an endeavour to identify, train and develop the young generation for self and social development. This scheme thrives to identify creative minds, unveiling diverse opportunities and leading them to their desired dreams through appropriate activities. It develops a value system to impart the right knowledge, the right vision, a positive spirit of competition, the courage of conviction and unwavering commitment to excellence. With an intention to provide requirements of knowledge in diverse sectors of career, MAKS envisages providing ample opportunities for career growth and individual development.

The Practice:

For the implementation of MAKS, schools from the neighbouring districts of Pathanamthitta, Idukki, Kottayam and Alappuzha are selected. Students from standard 7 to standard 10 of these schools are given continuous training for four years during the Onam and Christmas

holidays and during the summer vacations. These training are arranged as residential programmes. The main activities in MAKS are given below:

- * Identification of talented students belonging to backward/marginalized classes from the selected schools.
- * Assessing the aptitude of the students.
- * Inform the students about the scholarships and other schemes available for them.
- * Providing effective training for skill development and preparing them for competitive examinations.
- * Create social consciousness among students.

Selection Process:

The selected schools are visited by the coordinator MAKS and the Station Director RADIO MCFAST 90.4 to give awareness about the scheme to the teachers and students. A list of interested candidates is forwarded by the teachers of each school along with the application of the candidates. A written test is conducted as part of the selection process. Both multiple-choice and descriptive types of questions are included in the question paper set for the test. The question paper is divided into different sections for judging the aptitude, numerical ability and language skills of the students. Those who are qualified in the written test are called for a personal interview. Based on their performance in the written test and the personal interview the candidates are finally selected and are enrolled in the MAKS of the college.

Training:

The college has an in-house training team with faculty members who are rendering their services voluntarily. The syllabus and study materials for different subjects are prepared by the team and training and workshops are organized at regular intervals. The classes are pre-scheduled and are engaged by eminent faculty members of the college and invited experts from different fields. Close association with students, continuous quality up-gradation, feedback mechanisms, training and development exercises, need- based workshops etc. are the salient features of MAKS. The programme also focuses on the improvement of communication skills and personality development. The information regarding MAKS is communicated through letters, tele-calling, Radio MACFAST 90.4 and other ICT media. The performance of the students is evaluated by conducting examinations at regular intervals. MAKS intends to judiciously combine theoretical inputs with experiential learning. The programme is designed to inculcate a strong social orientation and competencies for personal development.

Evidence of Success:

The success and effectiveness of the programme are evaluated through the learner's reactions, behaviour and achievements. The feedback from the learners helped in evaluating the success of this scheme. A clear change in intellectual abilities, perceptions, social commitments and behaviour pattern is visible in the students of MAKS from the second year onward as compared to their peers in the home schools. The track history of the learners shows their growth in aptitude, communication, creative skills and improvement in examination results. They become more goal-oriented,

focused and enthusiastic to help others and to undertake responsibilities for the completion of the tasks assigned to them. Consecutive improvement in results is also evidence of success.

Problems Encountered:

To establish a working relationship with the schools and school children is not an easy task. As the duration of the programme is more than four years with contact classes arranged only during holidays and summer vacations, without affecting their regular studies. It is difficult to ensure continuous participation in all classes by the candidates. Moreover, the full cooperation and zeal of the parents is a vital factor for the success of this programme. As the classes are on holidays, and annual vacations their family get-together and vacation plans may be affected.

This programme is planned and executed as a residential programme for not less than 180 contact hours in a year, hence the personal needs of all student candidates including their food and accommodation have to be arranged. Cultural and entertainment activities scheduled in the programme requires additional efforts from the organizers. As it is a CSR programme, timely arrangement of financial requirements is also a constraint to the college. The availability of experts in different fields of study is also a problem encountered by the institution. Proper evaluation of the knowledge up-gradation of the candidate is also a matter to be addressed.