



## POLICY

### STUDENT DISABILITY

#### Introduction

The aim of this Policy is to provide for consistent and fair processes for accommodating students with special needs or disabilities within and by the Foundation for Professional Development (FPD) employees and their service providers. The policy is informed by Constitution of the Republic of South Africa<sup>1</sup>, Higher Education Act (Act 101 of 1997)<sup>2</sup> and CHE: Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) Criteria for Programme Accreditation<sup>3</sup>.

The policy also acknowledges the vision and mission of FPD to provide professional support to students through FPD's commitment to assisting students with special needs or disabilities by putting in place any reasonable additional support to remove barriers to successful completion of courses/programmes.

#### Definitions

<b>Disability / impairment</b>	A physical or mental condition, disadvantage or handicap that limits a person's movements, senses or activities. Disabilities can include visual, hearing, mental, mobility or other impairment.
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#### Equal Opportunities for All Students

FPD does not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language, or birth. Further, FPD treats all students with dignity and respect and will provide an environment for studies that is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimization.

#### Disclosure

Although there is no legal requirement for disclosure, FPD encourages all students with a disability to provide verifiable information relating to the impact their disability has on their capacity to achieve a successful outcome. It would thus be the student's responsibility to inform FPD of any disabilities should they require acknowledgement thereof and if any special needs may arise during the time of study.

<sup>1</sup> Republic of South Africa. 1996. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996. Available at: <https://www.justice.gov.za/legislation/constitution/saconstitution-web-eng.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Republic of South Africa. 1997. Higher Education Act Number 101 of 1997. Available at: [https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis\\_document/201409/a101-97.pdf](https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/a101-97.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Council on Higher Education. 2004. Criteria for Programme Accreditation. Available at: [http://nr-online.che.ac.za/html\\_documents/CHE\\_accreditation\\_criteria\\_Nov2004.pdf](http://nr-online.che.ac.za/html_documents/CHE_accreditation_criteria_Nov2004.pdf)

## **Student Confidentiality**

FPD will safeguard the confidentiality of personal and medical information of students at all times. When a student's disability status is known, disclosure will only occur when it helps to facilitate teaching, learning and assessment, and remove barriers to success.

## **Special needs support**

Special needs relating to disability/impairment will be accommodated on a case-by-case basis, upon application and provision of medical evidence by the student in order to provide the necessary additional support as required in the circumstance.

The provision of the additional support may incur an additional cost to the student in order to provide the support as required.

Examples of additional support can include (but is not limited to) the following:

- Oral assessment.
- Large-font assessment script- A3 size.
- Additional time allocated for completion of assignments and assessments.
- Scribe (will attract additional fees).
- Provision of additional space for wheelchair access.

## **Procedure of providing for special needs**

The approval and provision of requirements for special needs will include the following steps:

- 1) Communication of special needs and the provision of relevant supporting medical documents by the student.
- 2) Evaluation of this evidence by the Registrar and Head of School and authorisation of additional support provision to the student as required in the circumstances. In the event that the nature of the disability requires that the Assessment Plan be adapted, the Registrar and Head of School will refer the matter to the Head of Cluster.
- 3) Communication of the outcome to the student, including any additional charges that may be levied.
- 4) Recording of the special needs against the student's profile.
- 5) Communication of any required special provisions to the necessary FPD staff or other service providers to ensure that it can be implemented.

## **Accountabilities**

The Academic Committee is responsible for review and approval of this policy on an annual basis. The policy is to be distributed to staff via induction and distributed to students and FPD's community via the website and other publications.