

CHAPTER 29

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

29.1 The University is committed to the fair and equal treatment of all individuals, and, as an institution of higher learning, strives towards an inclusive mode of education.

TUT acknowledges that people with disabilities have the same right to reach their academic and professional potential as those who do not have a disability and are able-bodied. TUT is thus legally and morally bound and committed to a course of action that will increase its accessibility to students with disabilities and the extent to which they are accommodated.

In order to address this matter in a responsible manner and to achieve the goal of inclusive education, structures and policies need to be put in place to deal with matters pertaining to such students.

All actions resulting from the implementation of this policy will be governed by the financial capacity of the University.

29.2 PURPOSE AND APPLICATION

The Directorate of Student Development and Support (SDS) provides the student community with a service for students with disabilities (also referred to as the Disability Office). The main purpose of this service is to offer advocacy, counselling and support to students and prospective students with disabilities.

29.3 DEFINITIONS

In this chapter, unless otherwise indicated –

- (a) “**prospective student**” means any individual who is interested in enrolling or has already formally applied to enrol for a qualification presented by TUT;
- (b) “**relevant academic department**” means the department that offers the academic qualification for which the prospective student wishes to enrol, or for which an already enrolled student is registered;
- (c) “**service for students with disabilities (Disability Office)**” means the service for students with disabilities provided by the Directorate of Student Development and Support, as a formal bureau in the organisational structure of TUT;
- (d) “**student**” means any individual who is formally registered as a student for a qualification offered by TUT;
- (e) “**students with disabilities**” means prospective and registered students who have long-term or recurring physical or mental impairments that substantially limit their prospect of entry or advancement in training institutions, employment, social life or academic achievement;
- (f) “**TLwT**” means the Directorate of Teaching and Learning with Technology, as a formal role player in the organisational structure of TUT;
- (g) “**TUT**” means the Tshwane University of Technology, as duly constituted in terms of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997), as amended; and
- (h) “**University**” means the Tshwane University of Technology, as duly constituted in terms of the Higher Education Act, 1997 (Act No. 101 of 1997), as amended.

29.3.1 Categories of disability

- (a) Hearing disabilities (partially deaf, deaf).



- (b) Learning disabilities (dyslexia, attention deficit disorder, etc.).
- (c) Medical conditions that are, despite treatment, causing a disability (arthritis, diabetes, epilepsy, etc.).
- (d) Mental or psychological disabilities (psychiatric- illness or condition, etc.).
- (e) Physical disabilities (amputation, paraplegia, etc.).
- (f) Visual disabilities (partially sighted, low vision, blind).

29.4 RULES

- 29.4.1 TUT is under no obligation to accommodate a student regarding a disability if that student does not declare such disability on his or her application form.
- 29.4.2 Application and admission (see Chapter 1).
- 29.4.3 Measures for accommodating students with disabilities will be determined by assessing the following:
 - 29.4.3.1 Physical infrastructure requirements, also specifically concerning –
 - (a) accessibility of all buildings, including residences; and
 - (b) sport and recreational needs.
 - 29.4.3.2 Counselling and support needs (including needs for accommodating applicants with disabilities during the selection process).
 - 29.4.3.3 Required and available external resources.
 - 29.4.3.4 Ability of academic programme, including e-learning support modes (where appropriate), to accommodate the disability, and more specifically in terms of –
 - (a) financial;
 - (b) logistical; and
 - (c) staffing abilities.
 - 29.4.3.5 Personal support system and coping mechanisms of the person with the disability.

29.5 FEEDBACK AND NEGOTIATION WITH ALL PARTIES INVOLVED

- 29.5.1 Reporting to all stakeholders.
- 29.5.2 Negotiation and commitment to meeting the needs.

29.6 CONFIRMATION OF ADMISSION STATUS

- 29.6.1 This implies official written confirmation of the University's ability or inability to accept an applicant for a specific qualification.
- 29.6.2 Options must be provided for further counselling and referral.

29.7 RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UNIVERSITY

- 29.7.1 The University accepts the responsibility to provide a morally and legally sound practice in providing for and managing disabilities.
- 29.7.2 The University will provide a Disability Office to facilitate and monitor all aspects stated in this policy.
- 29.7.3 The University will provide basic counselling and support on a client-centred basis in the same way that it is offered to all students on University campuses.



- 29.7.4 The University accepts the responsibility to inform the applicant on time of its ability to provide infrastructure, adjust procedures, or meet any other predetermined need.
- 29.7.5 The University reserves the right to review the pre-admission contract with stakeholders, should any change in status or degree of disability occur.
- 29.7.6 The University will hold the student responsible for adhering to all general rules and regulations as published in this Prospectus.
- 29.7.7 The Policy on Disability will be made accessible to students and staff at the following places:
- all information desks;
 - the TUT website;
 - the Office of the Registrar; and
 - the Disability Office (Student Development and Support (SDS), Building 6-361).
- 29.7.8 The Disability Office will undertake awareness campaigns as it deems necessary.

29.8 RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

- 29.8.1 It is the right and responsibility of a prospective student with a disability or disabilities to declare his or her disability or disabilities when he or she applies for admission to TUT, and to negotiate support with the Disability Office.
- 29.8.2 It is the right and responsibility of a prospective student or current student with a disability or disabilities to acquaint him- or herself with the policy and all procedures regarding disabilities.
- 29.8.3 It is the responsibility of a student with a disability or disabilities to report a relevant grievance to the Disability Office (see **rule 29.2**).
- 29.8.4 If a student develops some form of disability during his or her period as a student at TUT, the student and/or the academic department concerned must inform the Disability Office if support, counselling or advocacy of any form will be necessary.

