

DISABILITY SUPPORT POLICY AND PROCEDURE (STUDENTS)



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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This policy and procedure outlines how CQUniversity will ensure an inclusive learning and working environment for students with a disability.

2 SCOPE

- 2.1 This procedure applies to CQUniversity students with a [disability](#).
- 2.2 Support services for CQUniversity employees with a disability are outlined in the [Disability Support Policy and Procedure \(Employees\)](#).

3 POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 Students at the University will be treated with dignity and enjoy the benefits of education and training in an inclusive environment that values and encourages participation by all.
- 3.2 The University seeks to eliminate barriers, provide appropriate resources, and create a supportive learning and work environment without compromising academic integrity or professional merit. Furthermore, the University will take necessary steps to inform and educate students of their rights and responsibilities in creating an environment free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
- 3.3 The University affirms the rights of people with disability through adherence to relevant legislative requirements and by recognition of the [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#). It actively seeks the input of students with a disability in the design, delivery and review of services as part of its ongoing commitment to creating a more inclusive University culture.

Access and participation

- 3.4 Students with a disability are encouraged to participate and contribute as equal members of the University community. The University will provide equitable access to courses, resources, services, facilities and the physical environment of University campuses so that students can pursue their academic and training goals on the same basis as other individuals. This may involve making reasonable adjustments that are necessary and possible unless they impose unjustifiable hardship on the University.
- 3.5 Reasonable adjustments will be implemented to remove barriers to participation in study and training for people with a disability. The University will also adopt inclusive practices and universal design principles in its day-to-day operations in key areas of teaching, learning, research, service delivery models and facilities, including measures to enable appropriate access to online resources and information technology.
- 3.6 Prospective and current students with a disability will have access to specialist student support services and resources, including assistive technologies, specialised software, equipment, and other reasonable adjustments. Students should investigate and be fully aware of unit and course requirements and access information about reasonable adjustments from the Student Accessibility and Equity Service prior to commencement of studies.

Identification, confidentiality and disclosure

- 3.7 Students will be invited to indicate they have a disability during the enrolment or application process. Individuals who require assistance can discuss their needs at any time, but preferably as soon as possible, to ensure that support and allocation of resources can be made in a timely manner. While disclosure is voluntary, it is important to be informed about the support and services available.
- 3.8 Information provided to the University will be protected and stored confidentially (refer to the [Privacy Policy and Procedure](#)). Confidential advice can be provided regarding support and services available at any time.
- 3.9 Documentation will be retained of reasonable adjustments. Information will only be used to substantiate reasonable adjustments made on behalf of individuals. Students must consent before any information about their disability is released.
- 3.10 Students who have registered and require assistance will be consulted about reasonable adjustments based on their individual circumstances. The University welcomes input from the students in this decision-making process to ensure their best possible outcomes.
- 3.11 University employees must comply with the mandatory reporting obligations of the [Health Practitioner Regulation National Law 2009](#) (Qld). This requires that a registered health practitioner must notify the Australian Health Practitioners Registration Authority (AHPRA) if they form a reasonable belief that another registered health practitioner has behaved in a way that constitutes 'notifiable conduct' including having placed the public at risk of substantial harm in their practice because they have impairment.
- 3.12 If mandatory reporting to AHPRA is required, the employee delegated with reporting authority will discuss disclosure with the affected student. University or health practitioner employees must report to the Dean of School any student registered with the AHPRA who, because of their impairment, may place the public at substantial risk of harm during clinical training.

Elimination of discrimination and harassment

- 3.13 It is unlawful to discriminate against a person because of their disability. Students who believe they have experienced discrimination or harassment because of their disability should pursue a resolution through the [Complaints Policy and Procedure](#). Use of this procedure does not preclude students also having the right to make formal complaints to the [Australian Human Rights Commission](#) or the [Queensland Human Rights Commission](#).
- 3.14 The [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#) (Cwlth) protects friends, relatives and others from discrimination because of their connection to or relationship with someone with a disability. In recognition of carer responsibilities, the University may make special provisions and/or provide support as required for students who are carers of people with disability.

4 PROCEDURE

- 4.1 Students who indicate they have a disability and would like further information about support offered at the University, can contact the [Student Accessibility and Equity Service](#) through the following channels:
- indicating they have a disability during enrolment. In this case, Student Accessibility and Equity Services will email the student and invite them to register
 - employees can refer students to the Student Accessibility and Equity Service, if they have obtained the student's consent, by using the appropriate e-form or email, and
 - students can contact the Student Accessibility and Equity Service directly for support at any time throughout their studies.
- 4.2 To register with the Student Accessibility and Equity Service, students must complete the [Student Registration Form](#). This form also includes a section for the student's treating health professional to complete. The report from the student's health professional will confirm the condition/s, indicate the impact of the student's condition on their ability to study or participate in course-related activities, and identify potential reasonable adjustments.
- 4.3 Once registration documents are submitted, the student will be contacted to participate in an intake appointment with an Accessibility Consultant. During this consultation, the Accessibility Consultant will confirm the student's support needs, based on documentation provided and discussion with the student. Examples of assistance which can be provided include:
- specific exam arrangements during official examination periods and invigilated assessment
 - participation assistant – assisting with skills such as time management and organisation, note taking and scribing
 - loan of and/or advice on specialist equipment or software
 - assistance in obtaining learning materials in alternative formats
 - temporary assistance due to short term illness/hospitalisation
 - specific arrangements to complete online assessment
 - specific arrangements to complete other learning activities including residential schools, groupwork or research-based activities etc.
 - assistance with disclosure and meeting fitness to participate requirements for work-integrated learning activities, and
 - assistance with applying for assignment extensions where required.
- 4.4 The Accessibility Consultant will develop an Accessibility Plan, listing the reasonable adjustments that are recommended and the relevant employees responsible for implementing them. The Accessibility Plan will also inform the student of their rights and responsibilities in collaboration with university employees.
- 4.5 If required, the Student Accessibility and Equity Service will seek approval for specific learning and teaching reasonable adjustments from the appropriate Deputy Dean Learning and Teaching (or nominee) (or Dean School of Graduate Research (or nominee) for research higher degree candidates or research preparatory courses) to confirm that the proposed adjustments are reasonable in assisting students to meet the required unit/course requirements. Reasonable adjustments do not modify course learning outcomes or mandatory requirements but may support a student in demonstrating their ability to meet the unit/course learning outcomes and/or inherent requirements. If necessary, the Accessibility Consultant will provide support and guidance to the student if changes to the recommended reasonable adjustments need to be negotiated with the school.
- 4.6 Once finalised, the Student Accessibility and Equity Service will email a copy of the Accessibility Plan to the student. If the student consents, the Accessibility Plan will also be made available in the University's Academic Information Management System (AIMS) for employees responsible for the student's course/units to access directly.

- 4.7 Accessibility Plans will be reviewed annually, or when required by the student or University (e.g. change in health or intended course/unit). An updated copy of the Accessibility Plan will be emailed to the student annually or when changes are made.
- 4.8 Disclosure of a student's disability to other employees by the Student Accessibility and Equity Service will be based on the level of support required. Students must indicate their consent to information about their disability and its impacts being disclosed on the Student Registration Form. Information disclosed in the Accessibility Plan will be discussed directly with the student by the Accessibility Consultant.
- 4.9 Students are recommended to be proactive and share a copy of their Accessibility Plan with relevant educators or research supervisors as early as possible in the term and to request specific reasonable adjustments e.g. time adjustments for online quizzes.
- 4.10 Confirmation of reasonable adjustments to complete invigilated examinations in the standard University examination periods will only be available to students via their personal calendar in the Student Portal (MyCQU). Students must check all details of their schedule/timetable (including room numbers, dates and times) and ensure that negotiated reasonable adjustments appear on their MyCQU calendar at least two weeks prior to the examination period. Students must register with the service by week eight of the academic term in which exam adjustments are required.
- 4.11 Student registration with the Student Accessibility and Equity Service will be confirmed when Accessibility Plans are reviewed. Continuing students may need to update medical information to change their reasonable adjustments, or when requested by an Accessibility Consultant.
- 4.12 Students returning from a leave of absence, changing courses or study mode should contact the Student Accessibility and Equity Service to update their Accessibility Plan as early in the term as possible.
- 4.13 Students who are waiting for diagnosis or require temporary supports should contact the Student Accessibility and Equity Service directly to discuss their personal circumstances as early as possible. The Student Accessibility and Equity Service is unable to refer students to external treating health professionals for assessment or diagnosis.
- 4.14 The Student Accessibility and Equity Service generally cannot arrange reasonable adjustments in a term of study for students who seek to register in weeks 11 or 12 of that term. This is due to the limited timeframe available to consult with educators and arrange adjustments. In this case, Accessibility Consultants can provide policy advice and support to prepare for registration in the following academic term.
- 4.15 Accessibility Consultants will provide ongoing support with study matters to registered as required. This may include referrals to other teams, liaison with educators, the work-integrated learning team and policy advice about study-related matters.

5 RESPONSIBILITIES

Compliance, monitoring and review

- 5.1 The Vice-President (Student Success) is responsible for implementing, monitoring, reviewing and ensuring compliance with this policy and procedure.

Reporting

- 5.2 No additional reporting is required.

Records management

- 5.3 Employees must manage records in accordance with the [Records Management Policy and Procedure](#). This includes retaining all records relevant to administering this procedure in a recognised University recordkeeping system.
- 5.4 University records must be retained for the minimum periods specified in the relevant [Retention and Disposal Schedule](#). Before disposing of any records, approval must be sought from the Records and Privacy Team (email records@cqu.edu.au).

6 DEFINITIONS

6.1 Terms not defined in this document may be in the University [glossary](#).

Terms and definitions

Consultation: before a reasonable adjustment is made; the student must be consulted. Students with a disability who require assistance, will be consulted on reasonable adjustments and other forms of assistances based on their individual circumstances. The University encourages students to be involved in the decision-making process to ensure their best possible outcomes.

Disability: As per the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#) (Cwlth), in relation to a person means:

- a) total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions
- b) total or partial loss of a part of the body
- c) the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness
- d) the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness
- e) the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body
- f) a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction
- g) a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgement or that results in disturbed behaviour

and includes a disability that:

- h) presently exists
- i) previously existed but no longer exists
- j) may exist in the future (including because of a genetic predisposition to that disability), or
- k) is imputed to a person.

To avoid doubt, a disability that is otherwise covered by this definition includes behaviour that is a symptom or manifestation of the disability.

Discrimination: involves treating people with a disability less fairly than people without disability. Examples of discrimination include restricting access to services, educational or employment opportunities on the basis of stereotyping people with disability or restrictive personnel practices (e.g. employment policies, working conditions). Discrimination can be either direct or indirect. Harassment because of disability, such as insults or humiliating jokes, is unlawful in employment and education. It is also unlawful to discriminate against relatives, friends, carers or assistants of people with a disability if discrimination occurs because of that connection or relationship.

Inherent requirements: the fundamental, essential elements to learning and assessment requirements of a particular course. The University will consider whether the person could perform these requirements if a reasonable adjustment were made.

Reasonable adjustments: tangible and practical considerations and measures made to the learning and/or working environment in order for students with a disability to fulfil the inherent requirements of academic courses and training. The University fulfils its positive duty to provide reasonable adjustments based on consultation. Examples of reasonable adjustments include the provision of materials in alternative formats, specialized equipment or modification of premises.

Unjustifiable hardship: a defence the University may use to counter a claim of discrimination if it is unable to make an adjustment for a person with a disability. In determining unjustifiable hardship the University must consider all relevant circumstances of a particular case. This includes consideration of:

- the nature of the benefit or detriment likely to accrue or be suffered by any persons concerned
- the effect of the disability of the person concerned, and
- the financial circumstances and the estimated expenditure required by the University.

7 RELATED LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS

[Anti-Discrimination Act 1991](#) (Qld)

[Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986](#) (Cwlth)

[Carer Recognition Act 2010 Guidelines](#)

[Complaints Policy and Procedure](#)

[Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#) (Cwlth)

[Disability Services Act 2006](#) (Qld)

[Disability Standards for Education 2005](#) (Cwlth)

[Fair Work \(Registered Organisations\) Act 2009](#) (Cwlth)

[Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Act 2009](#) (Qld)

[Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Act 2009](#) (Qld)

[Higher Education Support \(Other Grants\) Guidelines 2022](#) (Cwlth)

8 FEEDBACK

8.1 Feedback about this document can be emailed to policy@cqu.edu.au.

9 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Vice Chancellor and President
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