



Project: Inclusive tertiary EDucation in the West Balkans/IDEA

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Work Package	Title of Work Package
WP2	Establishment/ Enhancement and operationalization of Accessibility Units
Outcome 2.1.1	Internal regulation for students with special needs at Tirana University of Medicine

DRAFT

REGULATION FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

General Provisions

This regulation defines the unique criteria for the organization and provision of support for Students with special needs at the University of Medicine in Tirana.

Article 1

1. Studies at all levels (BA, MA and PhD) are organized within the UMT. All Regulations and other accompanying acts apply equally to the Students with special needs.
2. This Regulation sets out the policies of the UMT for the students with special needs support system and applies to all levels of study.

3. The academic unit is obliged to present a Guide based on this Regulation which would also define operational protocols.

Article 2

Legal Framework

Regulation for the treatment of students with disabilities at Tirana University of Medicine is based on Law Nr. 80/2015 “For higher education and scientific research in higher education institutions in the Republic of Albania”; Law No. 108/2012 “On the Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities”; Law No. 93/2014 “On Inclusion and Accessibility of the Persons with Disabilities”; The Decision of the Council of Ministers No. 1074, dated 23.12.2015 “On Determining Measures for the Removal of Obstacles in Communication and Infrastructure in Providing Public Services for the Disabled Persons”; Decision No. 1503, dated 19.11.2008 “Regulation for the Utilization of Spaces by the Disabled Persons” and in the Statute and Regulation of the University of Medicine in Tirana (UMT).

Article 3

Definitions

1. Students with special needs are considered all students who for various reasons have difficulty in including the learning process from the moment of application until the end of studies.
2. Students with disabilities (physical, hearing impairments, visual impairments, communication difficulties);
3. Students with specific learning difficulties
4. Students with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Emotional and Behavioral Difficulty;
5. Students difficulties due to diversity of cultural, ethnic, linguistic, gender, economic and social nature.

In this Regulation the following terms have the following meanings:

1. "Accessibility" is the removal of obstacles of all kinds.
2. "Obstacle" means:
 - a) Social barriers, especially attitudes, stereotypes and guardian behavior;
 - b) Environmental barriers, including communication difficulties faced by persons, students with sensory impairments, especially those with visual and hearing impairments, those for whom verbal communication is limited or impossible, or persons seeking simple forms of communication in order to read and understand;
 - c) Infrastructural obstacles, including those in the premises of the UMT.
3. "Discrimination against persons with physical disabilities" is any distinction, exception, restriction or preference due to disability, which has as its purpose or consequence the obstruction or impossibility of exercising, as well as other rights and fundamental rights recognized in the Constitution and law.
4. "Denial of reasonable accommodation" is the form of discrimination that occurs when denying or refusing to make necessary and appropriate adjustments or changes that are necessary in a particular case without placing an excessive burden in order to ensure that students with disabilities to be able to enjoy and exercise on an equal terms with others while pursuing studies at UMT.
5. "Students with disabilities" are individuals who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment which in interaction with various barriers may hinder a person's full and effective participation in the UMT activities on an equal basis.
6. "Inclusion" is the efficient and equal participation of students with disabilities in all areas and activities of UMT, through the removal of environmental, infrastructural and institutional social barriers, which prevent their exclusion, isolation or segregation and limit equal opportunities for these students.
7. "Reasonable adaptation" is the necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments, when necessary, without placing an excessive burden, to guarantee students with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal footing with others, all fundamental human rights and freedoms.

Article 4

Accessibility fund

UMT provides and approves specific funds and takes the necessary measures to provide financial funding in order to avoid environmental and infrastructural barriers in providing services to students with disabilities.

Article 5

Financial help for students with disabilities

1. Benefit from financial treatment with scholarships, students who have been admitted to professional study programs, undergraduate programs who belong to disadvantaged group and are students with disabilities certified by the Medical Commission for Assignment of working ability, beneficiaries of the disability payment.
2. All students with special needs who have been admitted to study programs, first cycle study programs who belong to disadvantaged background and are students with disabilities certified by the Medical Commission for Assignment of the ability to work beneficiaries of disability payments, are excluded from the annual tuition fee.
3. Pay 50% of the annual tuition fee approved by UMT, students attending studies in the second cycle of study programs and are students with special needs certified by a decision of the Medical Commission for Assignment of the Ability to work.

Article 6

Appointed staff for disability issues

Is an employee of the University who has special training and knowledge in the field of disability and has the duty to monitor that policies and programs are designed and implemented in accordance with the criteria set by applicable law for accessibility and inclusion providing equal opportunities for students with disabilities.

Article 7

UMT obligations

1. UMT is committed to ensure that all students with special needs receive education in a supportive environment that values diversity, inclusion, and participation. All units will use inclusive practices and reasonable adjustments to carry out changes in procedures or environments to remove any difficulties effects or barriers to participation.
2. UMT will ensure that in all its policies, procedures, functions and activities consideration is given to the means of enabling students with special needs full participation in all aspects of the academic and social life of the institution. All units will use inclusive practices and reasonable adjustments to carry out changes in procedures or environments to remove any barriers to participation.
3. UMT will ensure that the requirements of students with special needs are considered during program validation and that appropriate amendments are made. Program specifications that raise barriers to access by students with special needs will be reconsidered and reasonable adjustments made to minimize such barriers.
4. It is the responsibility of all main units to promote equality and diversity through their departments and to ensure that the policy and legal framework for the students with special needs are implemented. Students with special needs are responsible for requesting any review of implemented reasonable adjustments if such adjustments are not proving to be effective in meeting their entitlements.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Article 8

Rights and Responsibilities of Students with special needs at the UMT

1. The student must present evidence of eventual difficulty. Evidence is an acceptable document of the status of a person, applicant, student with special needs is an official document, based on which the applicant or student can be included in the field of service delivery.
2. The document is a proof or a functional diagnosis which confirms the type or degree of damage, the specific difficulties of the applicant - student, issued by the competent professional bodies or a document that proves a difficulty as a cause of the language in which the student studies.
3. Every student special needs has the right for:
 - a) Equal access to courses, programs, services, jobs, activities, and facilities offered throughout the University.
 - b) equal opportunity to work, to learn, and to receive reasonable accommodations, academic adjustments, and/or auxiliary aids and services.
 - c) Appropriate confidentiality of all information regarding their disability and to choose to whom information about their disability will be disclosed, except as disclosures are required or permitted by law.
 - d) Information, reasonably available in accessible formats.
 - e) Meet qualifications and maintain the essential University standard for courses, programs, services and activities.

Article 9

Rights and Responsibilities of the University, Faculty and University Staff:

1. Receive verification of a documented disability from professional competent institutions.
2. Set academic and program standards.
3. Evaluate students on their abilities, not their disabilities.
4. Keep all disability-related information regarding a student confidential.
5. Maintain the same standards for students with special needs as are applied to all other students.
6. Assure timely delivery of exams, along with all necessary instructions and materials.

Article 10

Appropriate Academic Environment and Infrastructure

1. All academics unit create a learning environment that is accessible. To accommodate a better academic environment, the academic unit must provide a various software and devices and assistive technology.
2. UMT takes progressive measures to implement the accessibility requirements of students with learning difficulties by composing and adapting to their needs any online information intended for them or for public consumption.
3. Organizing the study and work environment that facilitates access to the University campus and to facilities aces to the Faculty
4. To design or adapt instructions for orientation and movement in the building or classroom, design of furniture in classrooms and other premises - library.
5. Universal Design if technically and technologically feasible and appropriate taking into account the specific needs of the student with visual impairments, hearing impairments, communication and physical impairments.

Article 11

Learning Access Program

UMT should:

1. Determine eligibility for participation of students with special needs in the academic accommodation process based upon a review of appropriate documentation.
2. Determine the appropriate accommodation for each student based on the individual's need.
3. Teachers include in the syllabus the interactive teaching methods and alternate assessment (reviewing and adapting curricula for students with special needs).
4. Determine the ways of assessing knowledge for students with special needs (based on the difficulties presented).
5. Maintain academic standards

Article 12

Approval and entry into force

This regulation enters into force after being approved by the UMT academic senate.

Article 13

Other

This regulation may be reviewed annually.