

# Disability Policy

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**Title: Disability Policy**

## 1. Purpose

This policy affirms **Altai State University's** commitment to providing an environment where students and staff with a disability are valued, supported and encouraged, and are able to, as far as practicably possible; participate fully and independently in the life of the University.

## 2. Scope

- a. This policy applies to all members of the University community, as well as applicants for admission and applicants for employment.
- b. This policy applies in all University locations, including University-owned or operated residential accommodation.

## 3. Policy statement

### 3.1. Access and Equity

- a. Altai State University recognizes the value of people of diverse abilities, and is committed to the inclusion of people with disabilities in employment and education. The University also aims to ensure inclusion of persons who are associates of people with a disability, such as partners, relatives or careers.
- b. As part of the University's values of being student-centric and acting with integrity, AltSU will proactively work towards creating an environment that is welcoming and accessible to students and staff of all abilities.
- c. The University is committed to:
  - i. complying with all relevant legislation regarding access and equity for people with disabilities;
  - ii. providing services and support for students with disabilities to enable them to participate fully and independently in the academic, cultural and social life of the University;
  - iii. providing access for staff with disabilities to enable them to participate fully and independently in all aspects of their work and career development; and
  - iv. fostering and encouraging, among staff, students and the community, positive, informed and unprejudiced attitudes towards people with disabilities.

d. No one may treat a person with a disability less favorably because of his or her perceived disability status.

e. Ensuring that people with disabilities have full access to participate in the life of the University is a mutual and iterative process between the University and the person with the disability. It is expected that both parties will engage in good faith and with a focus on finding reasonable and workable solutions.

### **3.2. Reasonable Adjustment**

a. To give effect to the commitments, wherever practicable, reasonable adjustments to a usual policy, practice, work or study environment, conditions of work, teaching methods, or mode or method of assessment will be made to meet the needs of a person with a disability.

b. Adjustments in a study context must not lead to a weakening or lowering of the academic standard being assessed. Students must still be able meet the inherent requirements of the assessment tasks for a topic.

c. Students with disabilities who are preparing to undertake work integrated learning placements must meet the requirements specified in the Working Integrated Learning Policy and procedures.

d. In the event that a teaching staff member or manager does not accept a person's request for a particular adjustment, the final determination as to whether an adjustment is reasonable:

i. in a study context, will rest with the relevant Dean (Education); and

ii. in an employment context, will rest with the Students Council.

e. Where two or more staff or students require adjustments that may not be compatible, AltSU will work with both individuals to create an adjustment that meets both needs, bearing in mind that the adjustment may not be exactly as originally sought. This may include relocating the work or study site of one or both people.

### **3.3. Disclosure of Disability**

a. An individual with a disability who does not require any adjustments is not obliged to disclose their disability at any time.

b. An individual with a disability who requires an accommodation or adjustment is encouraged to disclose their need for the adjustment to the University, with appropriate documentation, as soon as possible.

This includes:

- i. applicants for work or study;
  - ii. existing students; and
  - iii. existing staff.
- c. Information regarding the disability, and any adjustments needed, may only be disclosed to other staff on a need-to-know basis. This may include disclosure to teaching staff, supervisors, facilities services, and other staff who may be required to implement the required adjustments. Subject to the above, University staff must treat as confidential and private any disclosure of information concerning a person's disability.
- d. Evidence of a disability may be required for appropriate adjustments to be provided.

### **3.4. Disability Action Plan (DAP)**

- a. In conjunction with this policy, the DAP sets out the University's approach to meeting its obligations and responsibilities under University Charter. The First Vice-Rector is the Responsible Officer for the implementation of the actions identified in the DAP.
- b. The DAP will be lodged with the Russian Federation Human Rights Committee to assist it to evaluate any claim in the event of a complaint being made against the University.
- c. Biennial reports to the First Vice-Rector will be made on the implementation and effectiveness of the Disability Policy and the DAP.

## **4. Definitions**

**4.1. Career of a person with disability** is an individual and includes an individual who provides significant unpaid personal care, support and assistance to another individual who has a disability, medical condition (including a terminal or chronic illness), mental illness, or is frail and aged. For the purposes of this policy, a person is considered a career when the needs of the person they care for are significant, regular and above what is considered to be general parenting or family duties. For the purposes of this policy, the term 'students with disabilities' should be read to include unpaid careers of people with disabilities.

Students who wish to seek academic adjustments due to their status as a career must be able to provide satisfactory evidence of their caring responsibilities as outlined in the Students with Disabilities Procedures.

**4.2. Disability** is a broad term that includes a range of impairments, medical conditions, chronic illnesses and injuries which have an ongoing impact on a person's daily function or activity, including their capacity to fully access and participate in university life.

This policy incorporates all disabilities, including:

- Physical
- Intellectual
- Psychiatric
- Sensory
- Neurological
- Learning disabilities
- Physical disfigurement
- The presence in the body of disease-causing organisms.

To be eligible for disability-related academic adjustments and/or funded support services and equipment from the Altai State University, a student must satisfy the criteria of disability above, as well as demonstrate the functional impact that the disability has on their capacity to study at a tertiary level (refer to the Students with Disabilities Procedures document for further information).

**4.3 Discrimination** happens when a person, or a group of people, is treated less favorably than another person or group because of their background or certain personal characteristics. This is known as 'direct discrimination'. It is also discrimination when an unreasonable rule or policy applies to everyone but has the effect of disadvantaging some people because of a personal characteristic they share. This is known as 'indirect discrimination.'

**4.4 Partner organization** is an organization, in conjunction with whom the University offers a program of study or a component of a program of study. The organization may be onshore or offshore, a private provider, a professional or industry association, a university or a college.

**4.5 Reasonable adjustments** are measures or adjustments taken by the University, which enables a student with disability to participate in their studies on the same basis as a student without a disability. Adjustments are considered reasonable when they balance the interests of all parties affected and do not cause unjustifiable hardship.

**4.6. Unjustifiable hardship.** There are a range of factors that need to be considered in determining unjustifiable hardship. These include but are not limited to:

- a. The benefits/detriments that might accrue to others including the person with disability;
- b. Other options/alternatives that could be considered or canvased;
- c. The cost and benefits to the University; and
- d. the impact on the academic integrity of a course or program.

## **5. Complaints**

Complaints about any breaches of this policy may be made in accordance with the:

- a. Student Complaints Policy and Student Complaints Procedures (if the complainant is a student)
- b. Staff provisions in the University's Enterprise Agreement and associated policy and procedures (if the complainant is an employee).