

AU Students with Disabilities and/or Learning Differences Policy and Procedure

Version No.	Approved By	Approval Date	Effective Date
1.0	President & BOT	February 2022	Fall 2022/2023
SCOPE	This policy applies to students (prospective and existing) with disabilities and/or learning differences and to processes administered by the nominated staff.		
TERMS, DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS	AU: Australian University or the University.		
	Disability: The Kuwait Law for the Rights of People with Disabilities (Number 8, 2010) defines a person with a disability as follows: “All those suffering from permanent, total, or partial disorders leading to deficiencies in their physical, mental or sensory abilities that may prevent them from securing the requirements of life to work or participate fully and effectively in society on an equal basis with other.”		
	Learning Difference: A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself as imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations. Learning Difference does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, or intellectual disability, emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.		
	Reasonable Accommodations: reasonable modifications made to the learning environment, training delivery or assessment method used to help students with disability and/or learning differences to access and participate in education, training and assessment on the same basis as those without disability thus eliminating or decreasing, to a reasonable degree, structural and/or learning barriers which a student might encounter due to her/his disability. Reasonable accommodations enable students with learning difficulties, sensory or mobility disorders to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and competency in a learning and assessment situation. Accommodations do not compromise academic merit or give unfair advantage to the students with disabilities and should not interfere with what the assessment is meant to measure or affect the learning outcomes.		
	Center for LD: Center for Learning Differences.		
POLICY PROVISIONS			

- 1.1 AU complies with the Kuwait Law (8/2010) concerning right of People with Disabilities and makes best efforts to provide equal access to its academic programs by provision of a supportive learning environment and reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or learning differences.
- 1.2 Students who require accommodations are expected to make their needs known to receive support as permitted by the University resources. Although disclosure is voluntary, failure to register as a student with disability and/or learning differences will delay the assistance offered to the student.

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- 1.3** The University does not grant accommodations that may fundamentally alter the nature of a course or a program. Students are expected to select programs that take into account their own particular strengths and weaknesses. Accommodations granted for a student in other institutions do not guarantee that the same accommodation will be granted in AU. Accommodations are not granted retrospectively.
- 1.4** Students that are registered with disabilities or learning differences are bound by all the University's policies and procedures.
- 1.5 Admission as a student with disability and/or learning differences:**
AU can offer admission and provide reasonable accommodations for the disabilities and/or learning differences specified below. The University is not able to accommodate conditions that are not included in this list:
- Dyslexia;
 - Dyscalculia;
 - Dysgraphia; and
 - Dyspraxia,
 - A mild Auditory and/or Visual Processing Disorder;
 - Mild Cerebral Palsy;
 - A Mild Visual Impairment;
 - A Mild Hearing Impairment;
 - A Physical Disability;
 - Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder;
 - With a minimum Intelligence Quotient of 85 on a standardized local Test (Wechsler).
- 1.6** It is the student's responsibility to identify him/herself as a person with a disability and/or learning differences in their admission application and provide the required diagnostic documentation to the Center for Learning Differences.
- 1.7** AU requires the following documents from students with learning differences applying for accommodation:
- A current psycho-educational or neuropsychological report from a qualified professional, including the components listed below:
 - Statement of the presenting disability;
 - Behavioural observations and validity of the test results;
 - Relevant history from a diagnostic interview, including:
 - a. Developmental background;
 - b. Medical background;
 - c. Academic background;
 - d. Family background;
 - e. Psychological background;
 - f. Other previous and current diagnosis (previous test reports can be submitted to supplement the current report).

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- Ruling out of alternative diagnosis or explanations;
- Test scores and discussion of results. Testing should include the following:
 - a. Aptitude assessment;
 - b. Achievement assessment in reading, writing and mathematics;
 - c. Information processing, such as memory, auditory and visual; perception/processing, processing speed, motor ability and executive functioning, and
 - d. Other assessment measures.
- Impact on the individual including an indication of substantial limitation to learning and the degree to which the disability affects the individual in the learning context
- Recommendations for accommodations that the student needs and the rationale for these recommendations by an external verified expert.

1.8 AU requires the following documents from all students with a physical disability:

- A valid Certificate of Disability from the Public Authority of Disabled Affairs; and
- A current medical report from a qualified doctor documenting the student's degree of disability and/or psycho-educational report from a certified specialist. The report must indicate the limitation to learning and the accommodations recommended.

1.9 Upon the receipt of the required documentation for application as a student with disability and/or learning difference, the Center for Learning Differences (LD) will carry out necessary meetings with students and guardians in order to provide a technical opinion regarding the admission of the particular student and whether the University has the resources to accommodate his/her needs. Admissions & Registration will complete the admissions process in accordance with the technical opinion provided by the Center for LD.

1.10 Accommodations and Auxiliary Aids Provided by the University

The academic accommodations and auxiliary aids offered by AU may include:

- Presentation Accommodations which allow students to access instruction and instructional materials in ways that do not interfere with their disabilities. Examples include:
 - Providing recorded instructions;
 - Providing instructions in large print;
 - Reducing number of items per page or line;
 - Providing a designated reader; and
 - Presenting instructions orally.
- Response Accommodations which allow students to record their work in alternate ways or to solve or organize their work using some type of material or device. Examples include but are not limited to
 - Allowing for verbal responses;
 - Allowing for answers to be dictated to a scribe;
 - Allowing the use of tape recorder to capture responses;

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- Permitting responses to be given via computer; and
- Permitting answers to be recorded directly into test booklet.
- Timing/scheduling accommodations that increase the allowed length of time for assignments, projects, assessments/exams or change the way the time is organized. Examples include:
 - Allowing frequent breaks;
 - Extending the allotted time for any given assessment up to 50%;
 - Allowing subtests to be taken in a different order; and
 - Administering a test at a specific time of day
- Setting Accommodations that change the location in which instructions, activities, assignments/exams are given or the conditions of the setting. Examples include:
 - Providing preferential seating;
 - Providing a space with minimal distractions;
 - Administering assessments/exams in a small group setting; and
 - Administering assessments/exams in a private room or alternative test site.
- Other accommodations that include:
 - Provision of special test preparation;
 - Provision of on-task/focusing prompts; and
 - Provision any reasonable accommodation that is not listed above.

1.11 Center for LD will facilitate the offering of the accommodations and monitor their effectiveness by using the LD Academic Feedback Form. Changes will be made as needed with the involvement of students, parents and instructors.

1.12 If a student's disability prevents them from taking a full course load, the student may be eligible for a reduced load as per AU's Student Academic Load Policy which will be determined in conjunction with the Academic Advisors and the Center for LD.

1.13 Confidentiality and Information Release:

AU is committed to ensuring that all information regarding a student is maintained confidential as required or permitted by Kuwait's law. The University will disclose information on a student to the relevant staff and faculty only to the extent necessary for provision of accommodations or for protection of the health and safety of the student and the community.

2. PROCEDURAL CLAUSES

Procedure to Apply for Accommodations:

- 2.1** All required documentation to apply for accommodations should be submitted before the commencement of the semester. For students who are diagnosed with a learning disability and/or learning differences during the course of a semester, the University doesn't guarantee that accommodations would be made for that semester.
- 2.2** Documentation submitted will only be reviewed once it is complete. All submitted documents will be kept in student's file with Center for LD. The student will be notified of the decision of whether or not s/he is eligible for accommodations, and the type(s) of reasonable accommodations the University will be able to provide.

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- 2.3** Students are expected to take an active role in communicating their needs. Students should meet with the LD Support Officers and be involved in the discussions to determine the possible accommodations that could best serve their individual circumstances within the means of the University.
- 2.4** Once the accommodations for a student are determined, a letter will be issued by the Center for LD and to be kept on record in the student's file. LD Support Officers will email each instructor for that student within the first two weeks of the semester. Instructors will be provided with the list of accommodations to be offered. The Academic Advisor(s), the Heads and Dean of Colleges for the student will be copied in such emails.
- 2.5** If an instructor believes that a suggested accommodation is not possible given the essential academic requirements of a course or a program, s/he should immediately raise this concern with the Center for LD. In such cases, instructors are encouraged to suggest alternative accommodations, where appropriate.
- 2.6** Center for LD will deliver needed support and assistance to the parties involved by providing guidelines and training sessions for instructors, holding collaboration meetings, and offering one-on-one tutoring sessions to students.
- 2.7** Initial accommodations recommended for a student may be modified during the course of study at the University in accordance with the student's changing needs or in accordance with course requirements. It is the student's responsibility to request such amendments.

ATTACHMENTS	
	- LD Student Information Form. - Meeting with Parents Form. - LD Academic Accommodation Rejection Form. - LD Attendance Agreement Form. - LD Academic Feedback Form.