



Baku State University

DISABILITY SUPPORT POLICY

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS





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Disability Support Policy



INTRODUCTION

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BSU is dedicated to promoting diversity, equality of opportunity, and eliminating discrimination as outlined in its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. This policy underscores the University's commitment to fostering an environment where students, staff, and visitors are treated fairly and not disadvantaged due to disability. The University proactively addresses the needs of its community and establishes inclusive practices, policies, and procedures accordingly.





Definitions

Disability: Defined as a physical or mental impairment with a substantial and long-term adverse effect on normal day-to-day activities, lasting 12 months or more. The definition encompasses various impairments, such as physical, sensory, mental health conditions, and learning differences.



Reasonable adjustments: Positive measures taken by the University to ensure disabled individuals can fully participate in educational opportunities and other benefits provided. These adjustments aim to minimize disadvantages caused by disability.

Inclusive practice: A teaching approach that recognizes student diversity and uses this to ensure all children receive equal treatment, opportunities, and respect.

Scope

The policy aims to promote values such as love, compassion, equality, and justice by eliminating social exclusion and raising awareness among students about the challenges faced by disadvantaged sections of society. It specifically focuses on promoting the rights and dignity of individuals with disabilities. This policy applies to disabled students (prospective, current, and alumni), disabled staff (including permanent, fixed-term, associate, temporary, or other employees), and visitors to the University. Our disability support policy encompasses a range of services and facilities designed to accommodate and empower those with diverse needs. Below are key aspects of our approach to disability support:



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Accessible Facilities

1. Campus Accessibility:

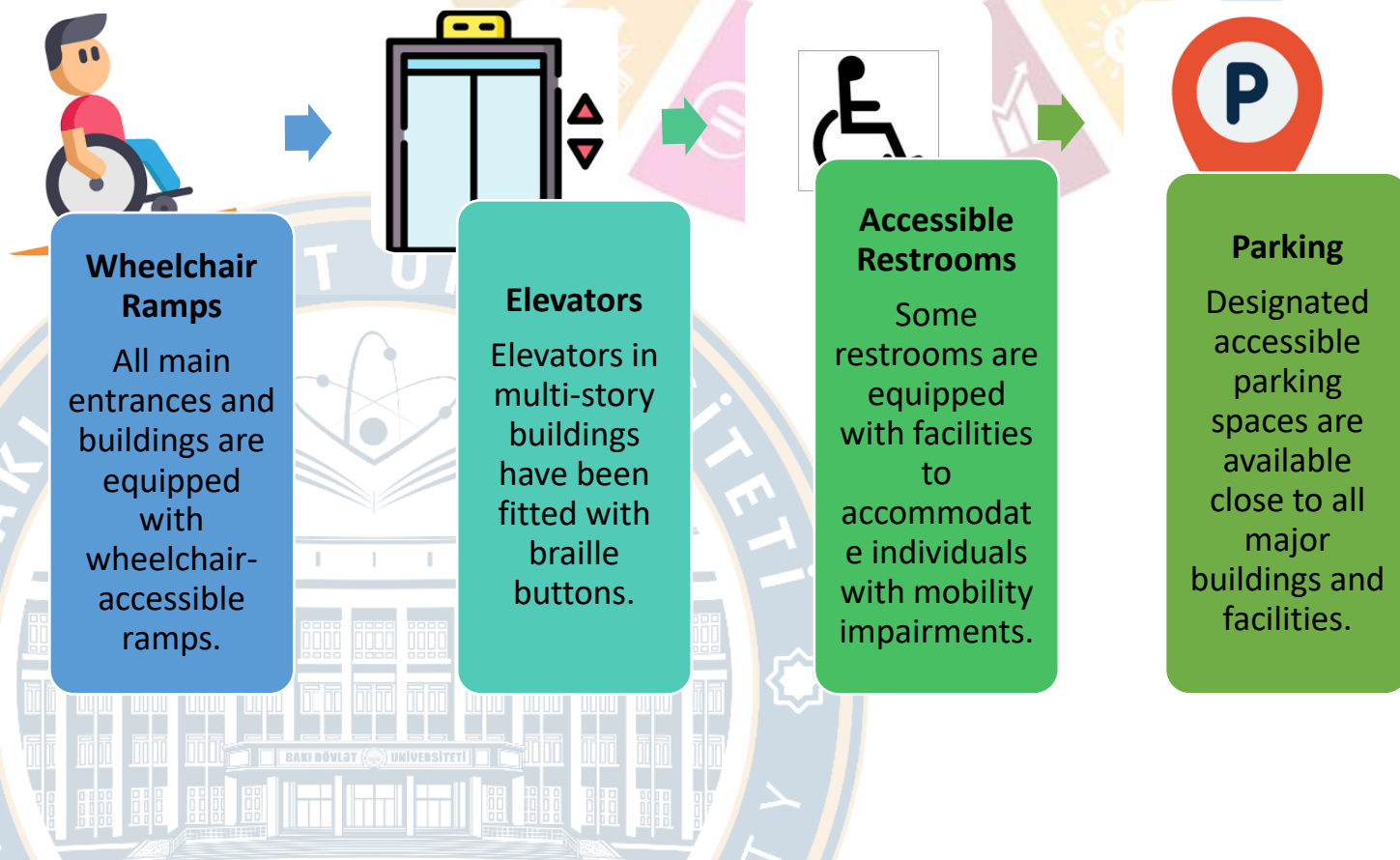


Objective: To ensure that all university facilities are accessible to individuals with physical disabilities.



Features:

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2. Classroom Accessibility:



- **Objective:** To make educational spaces inclusive for all students, including those with disabilities.
- **Features:**

Adjustable Desks

Classrooms have seating arrangements to accommodate wheelchair users.

Audio-Visual Aids

Equipped with hearing loops and screen magnifiers for students with auditory and visual impairments.

3. Library and Resource Centers:

- **Objective:** To provide equal access to academic resources.
- **Features:**

Digital Resources

E-books and online databases accessible via screen readers.

Assistance

Staff trained to assist students with disabilities in accessing resources and materials.



Support Services

1. Personal Assistance:

- **Objective:** To offer personalized support to students and staff with disabilities.
- **Services Provided:**

Personal Assistants

- Available to help with daily activities and academic tasks.

Mobility Support

- Assistance for navigating campus facilities.

2. Counseling and Mental Health Support:

- **Objective:** To provide emotional and psychological support tailored to the needs of individuals with disabilities.
- **Services Provided:**

Individual Counseling

- Sessions focusing on coping strategies and personal development.

Support Groups

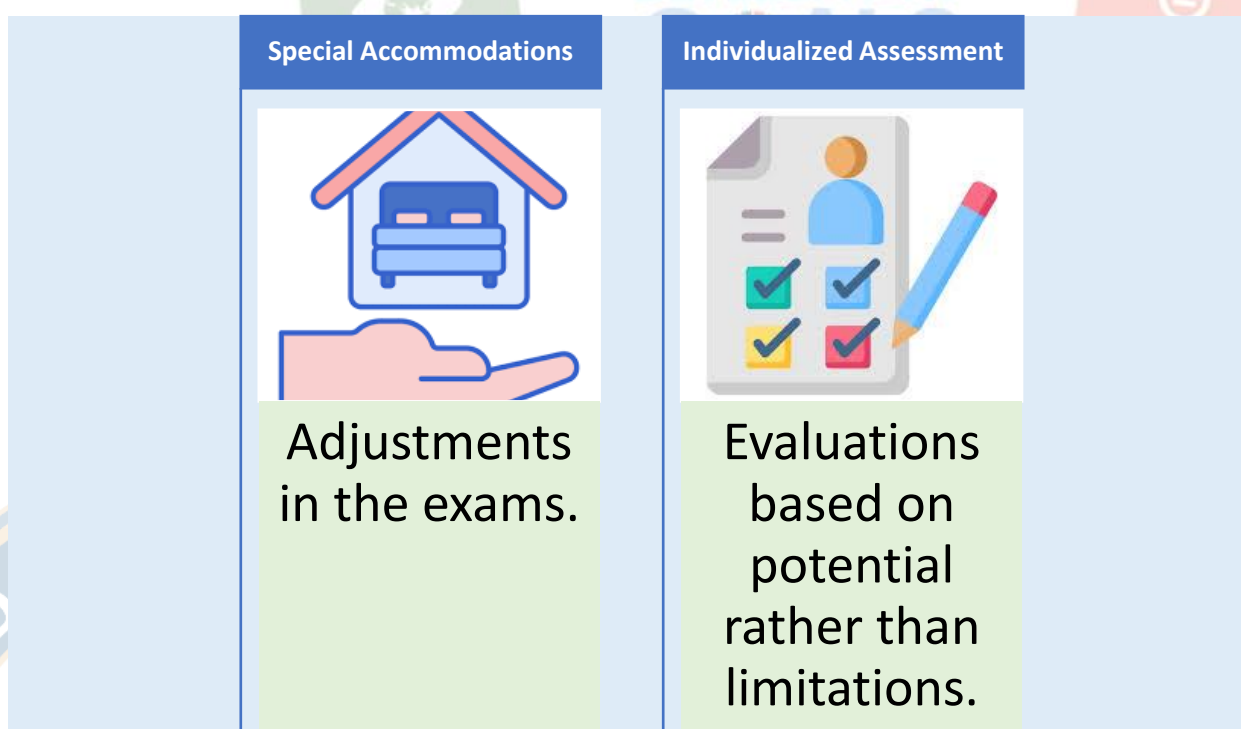
- Peer support groups for shared experiences and community building.



Access Schemes

1. Admission and Evaluation Support:

- **Objective:** To ensure a fair and equitable admissions process for international applicants with disabilities (local admission is conducted by State Examination Center).
- **Features:**



Baku State University is committed to fostering an inclusive and accessible environment for all students, including those with disabilities. The university offers on-campus accommodation designed to meet the specific needs of individuals with disabilities, ensuring their comfort and ease of access. In alignment with its commitment to inclusivity, the university has implemented a comprehensive policy that outlines reasonable adjustments and provisions to support students with disabilities. This policy ensures that adequate funding is allocated to improve accessibility, provide assistive technologies, and enhance support services. Through these initiatives, Baku State



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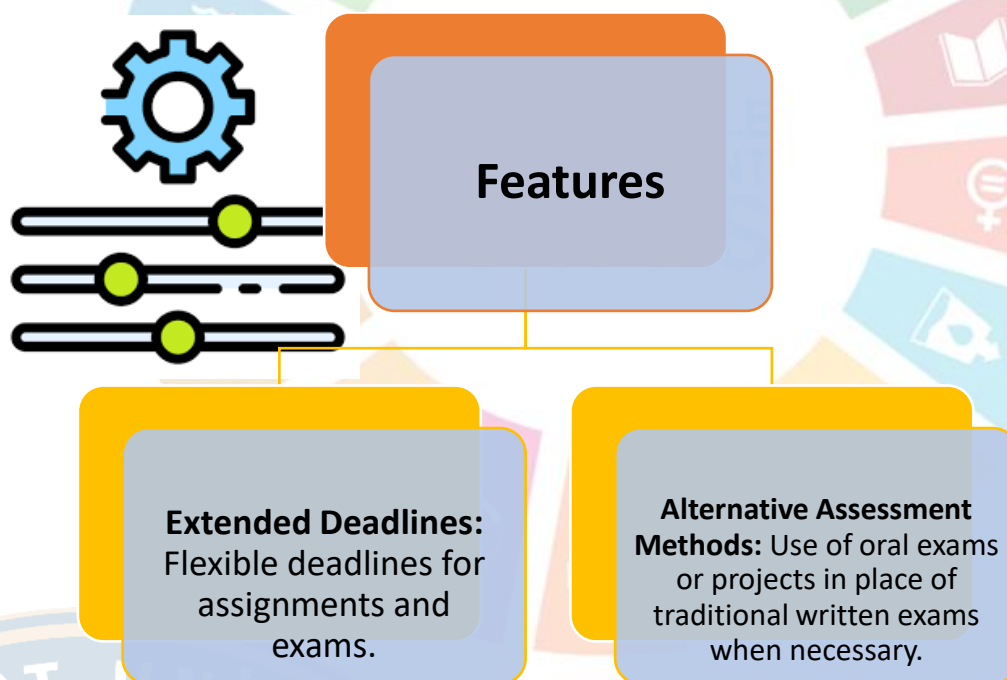
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University strives to create an equitable learning environment where every student can fully participate in academic and social life.

2. Academic Adjustments:

- **Objective:** To provide necessary accommodation that enable students with disabilities to succeed academically.



3. Inclusive Education Initiatives:

- **Objective:** To promote an inclusive educational environment that respects and values diversity.
- **Programs:**

Awareness Campaigns

- Regular workshops and seminars on disability awareness and inclusion.

Faculty Training

- Training for faculty and staff on inclusive teaching practices and accessibility awareness.



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The objective of the policy is to transform BSU into a disabled-friendly institution known for its suitable infrastructure, supportive facilities, and sensitized atmosphere, enabling individuals with disabilities to thrive and pursue their aspirations.

Inclusion and Anti-Discrimination



Stop
Discrimination

Ensuring admission of students from diverse social backgrounds and providing them with intensive mentoring and counseling.

Strictly adhering to admission policies for individuals with disabilities.





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Infrastructure Support

Upgrading campus infrastructure to enhance accessibility for individuals with disabilities, including the installation of elevators, ramps, railings, accessible washrooms, and tactile pathways.

Providing and upgrading mechanical and technological support such as disabled-friendly software, wheelchairs, and accessible signposts.

Offering sports and wellness facilities tailored to the needs of students with disabilities.



Sensitization and Awareness

Organizing awareness and sensitization programs and events for the able-bodied staff and students to foster a safe and inclusive environment.

Hosting academic and cultural activities, as well as training, short-term courses, and workshops designed to meet the needs of students with disabilities.





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Providing training for college staff on disabled-friendly teaching practices both inside and outside the classroom.

Collaborating with external agencies and organizations to expand learning and vocational training opportunities for students with disabilities.



Counseling and Additional Support

Offering counseling facilities to address the mental health needs of individuals with disabilities.

Conducting remedial classes to support students with disabilities.

Inclusive Support and Access Schemes for Students with Disabilities

Baku State University provides comprehensive support for students with disabilities through various access schemes, including mentoring and targeted assistance programs. The university offers personalized mentoring services to help students navigate academic challenges, develop essential skills, and enhance their overall university experience. Additionally, specialized support services, such as academic counseling, assistive technology provisions, and tailored learning accommodations, ensure that students with disabilities receive the necessary resources to succeed. These initiatives reflect the



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university's commitment to fostering an inclusive and equitable educational environment, empowering all students to reach their full potential.

Disabled Students Admissions



The University ensures that disabled students are admitted based on academic merit and ability. Reasonable adjustments are considered to support disabled students, with complex cases reviewed by a panel of senior members.



Disclosure, confidentiality, data protection



The University encourages students to disclose disabilities early, ensuring confidentiality and compliance with data protection laws. Students decide what information is shared and with whom, with options to keep specific details



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Inclusive practice

The University adopts inclusive practices to support all students, with individual adjustments made where necessary.



Teaching and Learning

The University promotes inclusive teaching and learning practices, with support provided to staff through resources, forums, and training. Universal design for learning ensures accessibility for all students throughout the educational process.

Mitigating Circumstances

Disabled students may apply for extensions on coursework based on their disability. Decisions regarding extensions consider factors such as coursework context, parity across student cohort, and exam board demands. Each disabled student is granted a single extension for each piece of coursework, with further extensions requiring additional evidence of extenuating personal circumstances.



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Alternative Assessment

In exceptional cases where reasonable adjustments are ineffective, alternative forms of assessment may be considered. These alternatives are tailored to meet student needs while ensuring fairness.



Competence Standards

The University aims to develop non-discriminatory competence standards. While adjustments cannot be made to competence standards themselves, the assessment methods may be adjusted to accommodate disabled students.





Off-Campus Activities



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Modules with field trips ensure inclusivity for all students. Alternative experiences are provided for students unable to attend due to

Placement

The University works with placement providers to accommodate disabled students. Students are encouraged to disclose their disability and discuss adjustments with providers.





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Study Abroad

Disabled students are supported in participating in Study Abroad programs, with adjustments arranged in consultation with partner institutes.



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Student Experience

The University aims for an inclusive student experience across teaching, learning, service provision, information access, facilities, and extracurricular activities. All staff share responsibility for ensuring equal access to opportunities.



Retention

The University endeavors to support disabled students in continuing their studies. Measures include making reasonable adjustments, exploring alternative programs, and offering support through Fitness to Study procedures.





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Disabled applicants meeting the person specification are entitled to interviews. Applicants are invited to request reasonable adjustments to prevent disadvantage.

Staff Retention



The University supports disabled staff in their roles by making reasonable adjustments. If necessary, alternative roles are sought to accommodate their abilities.

Technology

The University employs technology to aid inclusion and support for disabled individuals. Measures include e-learning resources, assistive technology, lecture capture policies, web accessibility standards, and provision of alternative formats.





Accessibility and inclusion are integral to campus design and maintenance. Regular access audits are conducted to identify and address barriers. Facilities such as accessible accommodations and rest spaces are provided to support disabled individuals.



All staff receive training on meeting the needs of disabled students and are encouraged to signpost to relevant services. Training covers disability awareness and inclusive practice.



The University regularly reviews and monitors the implementation of this policy to ensure effectiveness and compliance with legislative requirements and equality objectives. Stakeholder consultation and engagement are key components of the review process.



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Future Actions

To further enhance the Disability Support Policy at Baku State University, you may consider incorporating the following elements:

Peer Support Programs

- Establish programs where disabled students can receive peer support from fellow students who have similar experiences. This could include mentorship, study groups, or social activities.

Accessible Transportation

- Ensure that transportation services provided by the university are accessible to students with disabilities, both on and off-campus.

Accessible Communication

- Implement strategies to ensure that all communication from the university, including notices, announcements, and online materials, are accessible to students with disabilities, such as providing alternative formats or utilizing accessible technologies.



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Accessible Events

- Ensure that all university events, including academic lectures, social gatherings, and extracurricular activities, are accessible to students with disabilities by providing accommodations such as sign language interpreters, captioning, or assistive listening devices.

Career Support

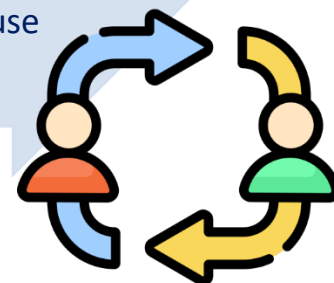
- Provide specialized career support services for disabled students, including assistance with job searches, resume writing, and interview preparation, to ensure their successful transition into the workforce.

Emergency Evacuation Plans

- Develop and implement comprehensive emergency evacuation plans that take into account the needs of students with disabilities, ensuring their safety and well-being in the event of an emergency situation.

Feedback Mechanisms

- Establish regular feedback mechanisms, such as surveys or focus groups, to solicit input from disabled students, staff, and visitors on their experiences with accessibility and support services, and use this feedback to continuously improve policies and practices





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By incorporating these additional elements, the Disability Support Policy at Baku State University can further strengthen its commitment to providing comprehensive support and fostering a truly inclusive environment for individuals with disabilities.

