

TAMALE TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY



POLICY ON DISABILITY

OCTOBER, 2020

Tamale Technical University with its diverse community of staff and students, has an objective to provide a compassionate and equal opportunity for all. It is both our desire and duty to ensure that all members of the University community are adequately supported to fulfil their potentials, particularly, those with disability.

This document outlines policy for supporting disabled staff, students, visitors and clients in line with our legal obligations and duty of care. The Disability Policy provides all with disabilities who use our facility the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of work and education. The goal of this policy is to promote the goals of all-inclusiveness, barrier-free and rights-based institution for persons with disability impairment in Tamale Technical University.

It consists of sixteen (18) sections which cover major issues such as purpose of the policy, legislation/ legal framework, goal of the policy, commitments by the University, responsibilities of staff, management, and employer, posting and transfer of person with disability, disclosure and confidentiality, monitoring and evaluation, participation and accessibility, teaching and learning, recruitment and selection, training, physical access retention, disability network group, complaints and grievance procedure, consultation and review, as well as implementation of the policy.

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Prof. Abass, Braimah
(Vice Chancellor)

Date

Signature

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SECTION ONE (1)

1.1 Background

Tamale Technical University with its diverse community of staff and students has an objective to provide a supportive and equal opportunity for all. The University is dedicated to a policy of equal opportunities for staff, students and clients with disability. It aims to create an environment which enables them to participate fully in the activities of the University. The policy seeks to ensure that members of the University community with disabilities have easy access to facilities and a conducive work/learning environment. The broad policy aims are based on the Persons with Disability Act of 2006 (Act 715).

1.2 Purpose

The Disability Policy reinforces the University's commitment to ensuring equal opportunity for the diverse staff, student and clients by ensuring that its facilities, services, products and equipment are made available to all manner of people respecting their individual needs, dignity, and independence. The University shall endeavour to review this policy and its practices in light of developments in the Higher Education sector, the legislative framework, and the University's strategy.

1. This document outlines the University's duties and the options available to staff and students with disabilities in seeking support or adjustments to their working and studying environment.
2. The University is dedicated to working towards an understanding of the Social Model of disability; this includes addressing the barriers to inclusion (structural, cultural, organisational and attitudinal), which adversely impact persons with disability, affecting their ability to meet their needs, rights and obligations.

1.3 Scope

The policy covers all staff and students of Tamale Technical University who have disability, and are covered by the Persons with Disability Act 2006 (Act 715). The Act's definition of disability is the guiding principle of the Disability Policy of the University. The University intends to ensure that its response to supporting disabled staff and students is consistent across Faculties, Departments and Units.

1.4 Legislation/Legal Framework

In 2006, Parliament enacted the ‘**Persons with Disability Act 715**’, which aims to provide a legal framework for persons with disability in Ghana. By passing the Act, Ghana seeks to do the following:

1. Fulfill a constitutional obligation of enacting laws to protect and promote the rights of people with disabilities; and
2. Fulfill Ghana’s international obligations

The disability policy therefore takes its backing from the ‘Persons with Disability Act 715’.

SECTION TWO (2)

2.1 Definition of Disability

It recognises persons with disabilities as those persons who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments. These conditions may be barriers or hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. In respect of the above definition, the University identifies the following as illnesses which makes a person disabled:

- Arthritis
- Attention Deficit Disorder
- Blindness/Low Vision
- Cerebral palsy
- Communication disorder, deafness/hearing impairment
- Dyslexia
- Emotional/Psychological disorder
- Epilepsy
- Multiple Sclerosis
- Medical Disorders
- Specific Learning Disabilities
- Spinal Cord Injuries
- Temporary Disabilities
- Traumatic Brain Injuries
- Other Health Impairments

This list is not exhaustive and may be revised from time to time.

SECTION THREE (3)

3.1 Goal of the Policy

This policy aims to ensure that:

1. An all-inclusive environment is created in the University to enhance performance and productivity.
2. Application for admission into Tamale Technical University is open to all.
3. Suitable learning, teaching and assessment strategies are employed so that curricula is as all inclusive as reasonably possible.
4. Identified needs of disabled students and staff are considered in the process of strategic planning and resource allocation.
5. Tamale Technical University seeks, where possible, to make reasonable adjustments to enable persons with disability have access to appropriate support to participate fully in the activities of University.
6. The views of members of the university who are persons with disability are taken into account when their needs are assessed.
7. Members of staff working with persons with disability have appropriate information about their condition.
8. Staff with disability have equal access to staff development opportunities.
9. Disabled members of the public can participate in public events held on Tamale Technical University premises.

SECTION (4)

4.1 Commitments

The University is committed:

1. To interview all applicants with or without disability who meet the minimum criteria for a vacancy.
2. To periodically interact with persons with disability in the university to deliberate on how to help them improve on their conditions and performance.
3. To make every effort to ensure that employees who get disabled do not lose their employment because of their condition

4. To take necessary steps to ensure that all employees develop the appropriate level of disability awareness needed to make these commitments work.
5. To ensure that potential and current staff, students and visitors with disabilities are not discriminated against.
6. To support the retention, development and progression of staff and students with disability.
7. To promote a positive working and study environment for staff and students with disability.
8. To do a yearly evaluation of commitments and accomplishment, to plan how to enhance them and to inform all employees about progress and future plans.

SECTION (5)

5.1 Responsibilities

General responsibility for the development, implementation, and monitoring of this policy lies with the Registrar via the Senior Assistant Registrar of Human Resource (HR).

Heads of Departments and Heads of Section have the following responsibilities:

1. Implementation of the policy in the department/unit and section;
2. Educate staff on the policy;
3. To take appropriate advice and action to help persons with disability in their departments and units.
4. Ensure that HR Occupational Health are alerted to an employee's disability upon becoming aware of the disability
5. Consideration of relevant adjustments;
6. Go for training and ensure staff attend as well.

5.1a Responsibility of Employees

1. Staff of the University is expected to treat those with disabilities with respect. To ensure this, regular training and awareness briefings shall be offered through Staff Development Programme.
2. Staff who become disabled while still employment, are required to inform HR Unit for further briefing on how to live in their current condition

SECTION SIX (6)

6.1 Posting, And Transfer of Person with Disability

Tamale Technical University shall comply with Section 12(1) of Persons with Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715) which states that an employer shall not post or transfer a person with disability to a section or place of the establishment not suited for them.

Section seven (7)

7.1 Disclosure and Confidentiality

The University shall encourage students and staff with disability to disclose any condition which negatively impact their day to day activities. This is to ensure that appropriate support is provided.

If individuals fail to disclose their disabilities which cannot be openly seen to the University, the University shall not be held liable for not providing support. Persons with disability are encouraged to disclose their condition(s) to their departmental/unit heads or the HR unit of the University.

The University shall ensure that the confidential information of persons with disability are not compromised.

Disclosed information will be treated in the strictest confidence. The University will require explicit, informed and written authority for giving information in respect of persons with disability to third parties.

Any person with disability who is not sure about their particular condition being covered under this policy can request a meeting with the HR unit head. If a person with disability has difficulty in working in a normal work environment they are encouraged to bring this to the attention of their supervisor so that appropriate plans and arrangements can be made.

SECTION EIGHT (8)

8.1 Monitoring and Evaluation

The University shall operate systems to monitor and review the effectiveness of provision for students and staff with disabilities, evaluate progress and identify opportunities for enhancement. This includes monitoring representation of disabled staff and students in different University activities including sports, performances and recreation.

SECTION NINE (9)

9.1 Promoting Equity among Employees and students

The Labour Act of 2003 (Act 651) makes it unlawful to discriminate against persons with disability in the field of employment, for reason(s) relating to their disability. This applies not only to recruitment but to all areas of employment, including the terms of employment, opportunities for promotion, transfer or training, dismissals or redundancies.

To this end the University will:

- a) Offer the same opportunities for persons with disabled in relation to recruitment, education, training, promotion, transfer and terms and conditions of employment;
- b) Ensure that persons with disability are given reasonable support, equipment and facilities necessary for them to carry out their duties successfully;
- c) Make reasonable adjustments to working arrangements and/or the physical working environment, where they disadvantage a person with disability.
- d) Offer staff with disability an annual review of their current employment needs and future training requirements specific to their disability.
- e) Ensure that it follows guidance from external advisors such as the Association of PWDs with regards to defining what is 'reasonable'.

SECTION TEN (10)

10.1 Recruitment and Selection

10.1a Recruitment

All vacancies will be opened to qualified persons including persons with disability, subject to availability of safety considerations..

During interviews, reasonable adjustment shall be made to ensure that a person with disability is not disadvantaged as a result of their disability.

Prior to any offer being made, an assessment will be carried out to determine adjustments that may be needed.

The following issues should also be addressed at this point:

1. **Health and safety:** Special arrangements may be necessary to ensure that persons' with disability do not create any hazard either for themselves or for others.
2. **Travel to Work:** In certain cases, Access to Work grants can be arranged.
3. **Disability Leave:** It should be treated as a 'reasonable adjustment' to allow a person with a disability time off from work because of their disability, for treatment or for rehabilitation. (For further information, please refer to the conditions of service for POWAG, POTAG, and PAAG)

SECTION ELEVEN (11)

11.1 Training

Where feasible, adjustments will be made to enable all staff with disability have access to training and development opportunities.

SECTION TWELVE (12)

12.1 Physical Access

One of the major problems facing persons with disability, especially the physically challenged attempting to complete their formal education centres on architectural barriers. Access to class/office facilities in the University is difficult for the physically challenged. This calls for improvements and alterations in architectural facilities in the University to ensure that all new buildings and refurbishment projects are both all-inclusive and accessible.

Existing building may be modified to an extent that it is possible. New structures should be planned to provide a higher degree of independence for persons with disability. Modifications that are likely to be expensive shall be justified only with a large number of physically disabled persons who cannot function without the use of such facilities.

Areas for modification for easy mobility for the physically challenged include, classrooms, applied skill areas, the library, sanitary facilities, recreational areas (play grounds, and auditorium), closets and storage areas (clothing storage, lockers, supplies and equipment storage), and parking areas (parking lots and loading areas).

SECTION THIRTEEN (13)

13.1 Retention

Tamale Technical University shall continue to employ any individual who becomes disabled and will explore ways in which this can be realised with as much flexibility as is operationally possible.

SECTION FORTEEN 14

14.1 Disability Network Group

Tamale Technical University shall set up a Disability Network Group, including representation from staff with disability whose responsibility shall be to link up with Management, Estates Department, Students Union and staff regarding access and issues that impact hinders their performance

SECTION FIFTEEN (15)

15.1 Complaints and Grievance Procedure

Employees who feel they have been unfairly treated or discriminated against on the grounds of disability may raise a complaint through the University's grievance procedures, copies of which are available on the University's website or from the HR Unit. Job applicants who consider that they have been discriminated against should be advised to write to the Senior Assistant Registrar-Human Resources, giving details as to why they believe they have been discriminated against.

SECTION SIXTEEN (16)

16.1 Consultation and Review

The role and working conditions of staff with disability will be reviewed periodically according to their needs, especially in light of any changes that may occur in their condition. Each disabled member of staff will have an opportunity at least annually, to discuss any current employment issues they may have and any future training and development needs. This review process will be initiated by the Registrar through the HR Unit. The HR Unit will be responsible for contacting the member of staff with disability to see if they wish to discuss any issues. The University Occupational Health Service has an integral role in relation to identification, assessment and ongoing monitoring of the needs of individuals who fall within the scope of this policy.

Section seventeen (17)

17.1 Implementation

It is the duty of Management, Heads of Department/Faculties to promote disability policy through their areas of activity including undertaking Equality Impact Assessments where necessary. This will help determine and allocate specific responsibilities within their areas with reference to this policy. They are responsible for promoting equality and diversity throughout their areas of activity.

SECTION EIGHTEEN 18)

18.1 Review of the Disability Policy

It is recommended that, the disability policy is reviewed every three years. Minor or editorial changes in policies require only administrative review and do not require full committee approval. Laws, regulations or interpretations of laws and regulations of Ghana Government may supersede a policy statement. These are implemented immediately by the University and may cause a change in the Policy. Any resulting changes in policies are submitted for approval as soon as possible.