

OFFICE OF DIVERSITY, ACCESSIBILITY, AND INCLUSION (ODAI)

POLICY FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES/SPECIAL NEEDS

“Disability is a matter of perception... If you can do just one thing well, you’re needed by someone.” – Martina Navratilova

1. SCOPE

Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments that, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

The term “disabled” is used interchangeably with “special needs” in the text. Applicant refers to an individual who applies for special arrangements due to a disability or special need at the time of admission.

2. INTRODUCTION

The **Office of Diversity, Accessibility, and Inclusion (ODAI) – Student Affairs** at IBA aims to support and facilitate students with ongoing or temporary disabilities and special needs in navigating barriers to a student’s academic and personal success. Students with disabilities normally face limitations while learning in the classroom and accessing services offered by institutions because of a combination of physical constraints, perceptions about their abilities, and other special needs. There is a need to make learning and campus facilities easy and convenient for them through supportive physical infrastructure, accessible services, assistive technologies, and supportive staff interaction.

The Institute of Business Administration (**IBA**) provides services for learning and inclusion to students to help with their learning in classrooms and labs and provides facilities outside the classroom on both campuses to foster an inclusive environment.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 IBA strives to provide equal access to facilities, activities, learning and assessment to all applicants and students so that no one is hindered in taking advantage of an opportunity due to a disability or special need.
- 3.2 IBA will ensure that students are treated fairly and respectfully and be part of an inclusive environment.
- 3.3 This policy covers all new applicants and current students with disabilities and special needs.
- 3.4 This policy conforms with the *“Policy for Students with Disabilities for Higher Learning Institutes in Pakistan”* issued by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) Pakistan in 2019.

- 3.5 IBA Karachi will provide facilities within its capacity to accommodate applicants with special needs. The final decision on the type of facilities and accommodations that can be provided will be subject to the approval of Deans Council with Dean – Student Affairs on board.

4. TYPES OF DISABILITIES

Broadly speaking, the following may be considered as disabilities:

- 4.1 **Physical Disability (Difficulty in Mobility)** – this also includes partial immobility of hands, legs, or feet.
- 4.2 **Speech and/or Hearing impairment** – this includes partial inability to hear or speak clearly, and comprehend conversations or lectures.
- 4.3 **Visual Impairment** – limited vision or inability to see properly due to an eye condition
- 4.4 **Intellectual Disability** – learn and perform tasks at a pace generally slower than others of their age.

5. ACCESSIBILITY COMMITTEE

IBA will establish an Accessibility Committee comprising of 3-4 members from the staff and faculty, and 1 IBA student with disabilities/special needs. This Committee will be responsible for ensuring that this policy and any updates are communicated to the IBA community, and that all services and facilities are provided to students with disabilities and special needs. The Accessibility Committee will handle matters in a professional manner with utmost sensitivity and confidentiality.

6. ADMISSION AND PROCESS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

- IBA will provide contact details of the ODAI focal person and information on facilities available for students with disabilities on the website, program announcement, and admission advertisement for admission.
- The admission form should have a separate section that allows students to select the disability/special needs checkbox and state what special support of facilities they require if admitted.
- Members of the Accessibility Committee will be involved in admission interviews for students with disabilities.
- IBA will ensure that applicants declaring a disability have full information about the support services available, so that they can make an informed choice regarding admission at IBA.
- Students with disabilities should be advised to visit both IBA campuses before application to assess suitability.

7. DISCLOSURE OF DISABILITY

- Prospective students should inform the Admission Office about their disability/special needs by selecting the relevant option in the admission form (as mentioned above).
- Student will have to provide all required medical documents along with a copy of their CNIC to the Admissions Office.
- The Admission Office shall be responsible to share a list of the students with disabilities/special needs with the ODAI Office – Student Affairs once the student has been admitted.
- ODAI Office will contact the student for further details and processing.
- Students who develop disabilities after they are admitted are encouraged to contact the **Office of Diversity, Accessibility and Inclusion (ODAI) - Student Affairs** so that their needs may be assessed. Requests for accommodation of the disability must be submitted in writing.

The following documents may be required:

- a. Doctor's/Therapist's Letter
- b. Diagnostic Documents
- c. Hospital admission letter and discharge summary (if applicable)
- d. Details of previous accommodation obtained during academic career (if applicable)
- e. Any other supportive medical/non-medical documents

IBA may ask for additional documents to help determine the severity of the disability and design and arrange for appropriate accommodation.

8. ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORT SERVICES AND FACILITIES AT IBA

IBA will ensure to make all possible arrangements for the safety and facilitation of its students with disabilities and special needs. These services and facilities include:

Physical Facilities and Accommodation

- Designated Disabled Parking spaces
- Accessible toilets with railings
- Ramps and Lifts for easy access to classrooms, labs, and other venues
- Wheelchairs available on both campuses
- Single Occupancy Rooms in hostels - In case a student with a disability requests for single occupancy accommodation, their request will be given precedence over other students ((on a case-to-case basis)

Inside Classrooms and Labs

- Accessibility Committee to meet with the respective faculty to inform them of the student's disability/special needs before the start of each semester
- The course instructor should inform the ODAI office of any limitation in their course so that necessary arrangements can be made beforehand
- Personal laptop for special needs software can be allowed if required, with prior permission
- Audio Books / E-books provided where applicable
- Dedicated lab equipped with a scanner to allow students with vision impairment to get their books scanned
- Non-medical assistance such as persons who can help take note or read out to the student
- Special needs students can be allowed to record lectures
- Separate priority seating area with enough room for a wheelchair
- Students with vision impairment should be made to sit in the first row

Examination and Assessments

- 50% to 75% extra time for each exam (on a case-to-case basis)
- Personal laptop (no open E-books/notes/slides and no browser tabs containing anything to do with the exam) for exams – on a case-to-case basis
- Writing board, if required (without any writings/drawings)
- Separate priority seating arrangement (with enough room for a wheelchair).
- The course instructor (if available) or a course TA should also be requested for a visit during the exam for clarification of any confusion in the paper

Mental Health Services

- All students with special needs and disabilities should have regular and easy access to psychological/psychiatric counseling
- Faculty should understand the special needs of students with disabilities and support and counsel them whenever required
- Students will be encouraged to visit the Psychologist & Psychiatric Resident Clinics arranged at the Health and Wellness Centre, IBA, for multi-level mental health care.

Other Support Services

- Students with disabilities will be provided with equal opportunities to apply for scholarship and exchange programs
- Special support during Field Visits and Events
- Arranging for a Sign Language Interpreter for special events such as welcome, farewell, orientation and convocation
- Special seating during events – the administration must be informed a few days prior to the event to arrange for special seating or arrangements – for example, a ramp for the stage.

Awarding Degree and Transcripts

- As per the HEC Policy, after successful completion of the degree program, students with disabilities will be provided fee waivers for the issuance of degree and transcripts, degree attestation, and/or equivalence certificate.

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