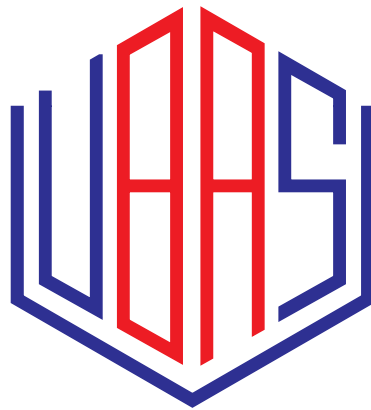


# UBAS Differently-abled Students Policy



Lahore University of Biological and Applied Sciences

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# Differently-abled Students Policy

## 1 Purposes and Principles of the Policy

- 1.1. The Lahore University of Biological and Applied Sciences (“UBAS”) is committed to the objective that students with disabilities shall have equal opportunities to access and attain education at UBAS.
- 1.2. This policy for students with disabilities at UBAS aims to create an enabling environment for inclusive education and facilitate the participation of students with disabilities in all academic and extra-curricular aspects of UBAS.
- 1.3. The policy recognizes that disability covers a wide range of impairments and different disabilities can have varying impacts on study, work, and other aspects of life, warranting special considerations.
- 1.4. This policy affirms that persons with disabilities are valuable members of society and UBAS have an obligation to undertake all reasonable actions to enable persons with disabilities to avail the opportunities for higher education available to other students. Through this policy, UBAS endeavors to eliminate obstacles that might hamper the academic and career pursuits of persons with disabilities and provide them equal educational opportunities.
- 1.5. This policy complements relevant national legislation for persons with disabilities and sets forth the minimum standards with respect to students with disabilities at UBAS. It is mandated that no student shall be subjected to discrimination at any stage during their academic or professional pursuits on the basis of any disability.

## 2 Scope of the Policy

- 2.1. This policy is applicable to all students with disabilities, including enrolled students, prospective students and students that acquire disabilities during their studies at UBAS.
- 2.2. For the purposes of this policy, the term “disability” shall mean any long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairments which may hinder a student’s ability to effectively participate in normal day-to-day activities on an equal basis with others; provided, that the definition will also include any additional conditions covered under the applicable disability-focused laws of the jurisdiction in which the University is located.
- 2.3. The term “Disability Certificate” as used in this policy shall mean the disability certificate issued for persons with disabilities from the National/Provincial Council for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons or a CNIC with a disability logo or proof of registration in NADRA database as a ‘special person’.

## 3 The Accessibility Committee and Disability Coordinators

- 3.1. **The Accessibility Committee:** UBAS shall establish a standing Accessibility Committee comprising of five (05) members to be appointed by the Vice Chancellor (VC), which shall include:
  - a) Director Student Affairs (DSA) : – Convener.
  - b) HoD Psychology Department.
  - c) two members from the faculty (one male and one female): – Members
  - d) one special student to be nominated by DSA : – Members
  - e) Deputy Registrar : – Secretary.
- 3.1 (a) General Provisions for work of the Accessibility Committee:
  - a) in absence of the Chair, HoD Psychology shall act as Chair of the meeting.

- b) the Chair and the members shall hold office for the period of three years and shall in no case be eligible for re-appointment for more than one similar term.
- c) the VC shall appoint all members of the Accessibility Committee.

**3.2. Roles and Responsibilities of the Accessibility Committee:** The Accessibility Committee shall be responsible for the following:

- a) determining what accommodations are needed for students with disabilities and where necessary, arranging for disability assessment by a professional;
- b) arranging and overseeing the provision of reasonable accommodations in accordance with this policy;
- c) arranging for counseling by a psychiatrist for students with disabilities whenever substantial need is established;
- d) providing information and advice to students and parents on the facilities and support available for persons with disabilities;
- e) advising the faculty on the policies and procedures relevant to students with disabilities and how best to include and accommodate these students;
- f) advising on ways to improve access for students with disabilities vis-a-vis admissions, examinations, dissertations and other affairs of the institution and on the implementation of all relevant disability-related legislation;
- g) promoting awareness on different disabilities and disability related issues through dedicated seminars, discussions, workshops and community engagement activities; and
- h) liaising with philanthropic organizations working for persons with disabilities to enhance the capacities of their institutions to engage with persons with disabilities and to improve the facilities available for them.

**3.3. Decisions of the Accessibility Committee:** The quorum requirement for meetings of the Accessibility Committee shall be at least three members of the committee. Decisions shall be made by a majority of the members present.

**3.4. The Disability Coordinators:** The VC shall designate two members of the Accessibility Committee to be the Disability Coordinators, at least one of the Disability Coordinators shall be a woman.

**3.5. Roles and Responsibilities of the Disability Coordinators:** The Disability Coordinators shall be responsible for the following:

- a) to be a point of liaison between the Accessibility Committee and students with disabilities;
- b) guide and advise students with disabilities interested in seeking admission and enrollment on the facilities available at UBAS;
- c) arrange meetings with enrolled students with disabilities and maintain records of these interactions.
- d) advise and facilitate enrolled students with disabilities during their studies on how to fulfill the administrative requirements of the institution and benefit from other services such as library, career counselling, extra-curricular opportunities etc.
- e) refer students with disabilities to the Accessibility Committee for arrangement of psychiatric counseling through UBAS well being center;
- f) ensure that the students' access requirements are identified and made known to relevant faculty well ahead of commencement of classes;
- g) advise students with disabilities before the commencement of each semester or academic year on their course selection and learning activities entailed; and
- h) seek and record information on access requirements of individual student with disability enrolled at UBAS.

## **4 Admissions-Related Matters**

4.1. Application Process: Before applying for admission, students with disabilities are encouraged to visit UBAS and its website to assess the suitability of the premises and its surroundings. The following process shall be followed with respect to admissions:

- a) Admission application forms shall include a section where students can convey information on their disability. Applicants shall be required to provide copy of a Disability Certificate. The admission application form shall also include a questionnaire for students with disabilities to explain their needs.

- b) It is important to note that there shall not be any adverse impact on the application of a prospective student based on his or her disclosure of a disability.
- c) Applicants shall assure that if they disclose their disability, the information provided shall be confidential record.
- d) Applicants who have declared a disability on their application form shall be consulted about their needs and given advice on how the UBAS can accommodate their needs.
- e) The UBAS shall provide contact details for the Disability Coordinators and information on facilities available for students with disabilities.
- f) In case, the UBAS does not have appropriate facilities to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities to study at their institution on legitimate grounds, and the student has otherwise been deemed eligible to be admitted to the university in terms of the admission criteria, the Accessibility Committee shall report the matter to VC for appropriate disposal.
- g) Upon admission, students with disabilities will be offered an opportunity to provide additional information and documentation about their accessibility needs.

4.2. **Entrance Exam:** UBAS entrance exam shall conform to the following requirements:

- a) Students with disabilities must be able to request special arrangements for entrance tests or interviews as per their needs.
- b) The UBAS will ensure the provision of reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities depending on the type of their disability and need during their entrance exam.
- c) In some cases, students with disabilities may be exempted from a part of an examination because of a disability. The UBAS may decide to use an alternate assessment tool to ascertain suitability of the student for the degree program.
- d) Students with disabilities must be informed well in advance about the arrangements being provided for them to undertake the entrance exam.

4.3. **Scholarship:** Students with disability shall be eligible for a Special Scholarship announced by the university from time to time. The scholarship continuation condition shall be relaxed from the normal students.



## 5 Process for Requesting Reasonable Accommodations

- 5.1. The UBAS shall provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities whenever necessary to encourage their participation in classrooms, libraries, laboratories, cafeterias and sports centers.
- 5.2. UBAS shall have preparedness to offer reasonable accommodations to students and should not wait to initiate action until requested.
- 5.3. All students will be informed about options to request reasonable accommodations commensurate with their need during the orientation session.
- 5.4. At the commencement of each course, staff and faculty shall also clearly inform the students that any student who, because of a disability, may require special accommodations in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor or the Disability Coordinators as soon as possible so that requisite arrangements can be made.
- 5.5. The Accessibility Committee will strive to understand and recommend reasonable accommodations specifically focusing on the needs of the individual student rather than recommending generic accommodations that may apply to a certain category a disability.
- 5.6. The views of the student with disabilities shall be taken into consideration at all times during the assessment of their needs. The assessment report, containing detailed recommendations, will be shared with the student prior to its implementation.
- 5.7. Alternatively, the class instructor, the Disability Coordinators and the student may mutually discuss and decide on any special requirements needed (including those needed for mid-term or final examinations) and accommodations at the start of the course and share them with the Accessibility Committee if its support is needed.
- 5.8. These accommodations may take considerable time, and students should be informed of their course requirements, course components and reading materials well before the commencement of a course and meet their accessibility requirements at the start of the course.

- 5.9. The Accessibility Committee shall monitor the implementation of any accommodations deemed necessary and reasonable.
- 5.10. The University shall ensure the provision of the same level of services and support to students who acquire any disability (or become aware of their disability) during the course of their study. Every reasonable opportunity will be provided to them to complete their studies successfully.
- 5.11. A student with a temporary disability may receive accommodations as needed on a case by case basis upon submission of a medical certificate by a registered medical practitioner and upon recommendation by the Accessibility Committee for reasons to be recorded in writing.
- 5.12. Faculty and staff should be aware of the use of accommodations and learning aides for students with disabilities.
- 5.13. UBAS may arrange training programs to train faculty, staff, and members of the accessibility committee on best practices for accommodating students with disabilities and especially encourage its staff, faculty, and students to participate in development opportunities related to the provision of education to persons with disabilities.
- 5.14. Students with disabilities shall be encouraged to suggest improvements in accessibility and accommodation services available at the UBAS.

## 6 Types of Accommodations

- 6.1. **Reasonable Accommodations:** In determining the accommodations to be provided, the Accessibility Committee shall make sure that these are reasonably tied to the nature and extent of the disability suffered. It is important to remember that accommodations are not advantages, but are a means of providing each student with full access to study programs. Depending on the case, accommodations may include:
- a) medical and mental health assistance such as access to counselling;
  - b) changes to physical infrastructure including addition of footpaths, road crossings, signage etc., provision of ramps or special pathways, wheel chairs etc.

- c) Provision of free transport service if possible within the campus for students with disabilities in particular;
- d) human, digital and assistive technology support such as readings, lecture tape recordings, audio taped or books, and magazines, lecture notes etc.
- e) additional time, explanation and quiet areas; and
- f) any other accommodation as may be necessary as determined by the Accessibility Committee from time to time.

6.2. **Examinations and Assessments:** At the commencement of each course appropriate arrangements for examination and assessment shall be determined through mutual consultation between the faculty, the Disability Coordinators and the student.

6.3. **Participation in sports, cultural, and recreational facilities:** Students should be able to participate equally in all aspects of student life. UBAS shall provide reasonable accommodations to allow students with disabilities to take part in student activities and athletics if they wish to.

6.4. **Continuing education:** Students with disabilities should have access to all necessary accommodations that would allow them to pursue all educational and skill related activities offered to their peers at UBAS.

6.5. **Convocation:** The UBAS shall make every effort to ensure that students with disabilities are able to participate fully in their convocations and enjoy this day along with all their fellow graduates.

## 7 Grievances

7.1. Any grievances pertaining to disability services available at UBAS or any complaint by a student with disability concerning discrimination, abuse or mistreatment by another student, staff or faculty will be submitted to the Disability Coordinators. If they are unable to resolve the concern, the Accessibility Committee may be approached. The matter may be referred to the VC if the issue is not appropriately resolved by the Accessibility Committee.

- 7.2. If the grievance concerns a Disability Coordinator or a member of the Accessibility Committee, the complaint shall be received directly by the office of the Vice Chancellor, who shall replace the person against whom the complaint has been made if substantial grounds for removal are established on grounds such as harassment, discrimination, indolence etc.

## **8 Funds to Support Reasonable Accommodations**

The UBAS shall ensure a special fund to support students with disabilities and annually contribute sufficient funds therein through exclusive budgetary provision. Additionally, all funds and contributions raised through philanthropy shall accrue in this fund. Whenever the UBAS or a student with disabilities' own financial resources are deficient in meeting an accessibility requirement pertaining to his or her studies, the UBAS shall use this fund to provide the necessary accommodations after a thorough evaluation of each case.